

From
The Adirondacks
To
The Gulf



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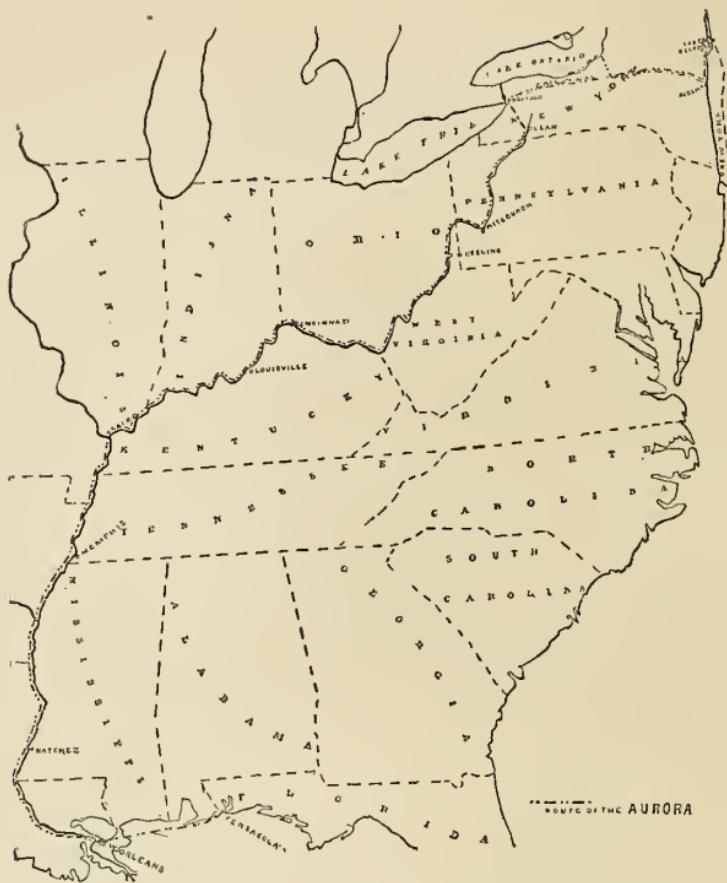




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CRUISE OF THE AURORA.



From the Adirondacks to the Gulf.

THE
CANOE AURORA;
A CRUISE
FROM THE
ADIRONDACKS TO THE GULF.

BY

Manly Blaworsz
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CRUISE OF THE AURORA.

CHAPTER I.

WHICH LEAVES US IN THE-POT-THAT-WASHES-ITSELF.

“BUT you surely do not propose to make the trip in that little thing?”

The speaker was not a canoeist; and it was perhaps natural then that he should express some incredulity when I explained that my destination was the west coast of Florida. The proposed route was from Lake George, New York, via the Champlain and Erie canals to Buffalo, thence coasting Lake Erie to Cleveland, Ohio; through the Ohio Canal to Portsmouth on the Ohio River; down that stream to the Mississippi, and so on to the Gulf. This was the trip. The “little thing” in which I was to make the voyage was the canoe Aurora. The boat was sharp at both ends; hull of white cedar; deck, quarter-inch red cedar; length over all, 15 feet; breadth of beam, 31 inches at bottom of top streak; depth amidships, 9 inches; at bow, 19 inches; at stern, 17½ inches; cockpit, 6 feet in length, with breadth of 21 inches. The fittings consisted of a double-bladed

paddle 9 feet in length, jointed in the center, and two lateen sails, of a combined area of about 55 square feet. This canoe is registered in the American Canoe Association as a "Princess" model, and was built expressly for this cruise, by J. H. Rushton, of Canton, N. Y. Without her fittings the canoe weighed 85 pounds. My companion, S. D. Kendall, of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, had built his own craft, and his canoe was of excellent workmanship, but low and rather broad for easy paddling. Her length over all was 14 feet; breadth of beam, 3 feet. Her fittings were the same as those of my own boat, except that she carried a batten lug sail. She was called the *Comfort*.

One glorious morning in August, 1882, at the close of the American Canoe Association meet, at the Canoe Islands, we launched our craft from the shore of lovely Lorna Island, and glided out over the shimmering surface of Lake George. The start was auspicious, and all through the first day, as we paddled on through scenes of ever-changing beauty and past one and another spot rich in historic memories, the sun was bright, the wind fair, and the hours full of happy portents for the thousands of miles before us. Down the lake we had passed, through the Narrows with their hundred islands, on our left the richly clad slopes of Tongue Mountain, on our right the overshadowing peak of Black, until the shadows of the mountains admonished us that a camp must be made. And selecting an island, the fire was soon burning before the tent.

On the following morning we went on past Black Mountain Point, making a brief halt to inspect the remains of the once beautiful steamboat Minnehaha, now converted into a lodging-house. With bows toward the towering Adirondack Mountains, standing in gloomy grandeur at the gateways of the Northern Wilderness, every stroke of the paddle carried us through scenes of romance and song and history.

Passing out from the Narrows, we skirted the shores of Sabbath-day Point, the scene of some stirring incidents in the history of these waters. Friend's Point was decided upon for the last camp on the lake; and sitting about the camp-fire on that brilliant night, we recalled the traditions of the many skirmishes fought on this ground, during the French and Indian wars.

After a night of restful sleep, a beautiful morning greeted us, and soon the curling smoke from our fire ascended through the heavy canopy of pines and faded into thin air. Then we paddled out over the mirror-like surface of water, here said to be more than 500 feet in depth. Passing under Anthony's Nose, we crossed the last broad sheet of water, on the opposite side of which is Prisoners' Island, where Abercrombie is said to have imprisoned some of his captives, who, finding the water shallow, walked ashore to the mainland and made their escape. A paddle of one mile brought us to the end of our lake journey, and we had before us the first portage of the cruise. To reach the waters of Lake Champlain,

247 feet below us, our canoes must be transported one and three-quarter miles, through the village of Ticonderoga to the creek of the same name. The services of "Sardine," a village cartman, were secured; and the dainty craft, wrapped to protect their light shells from damage, were transported in a springless wagon. A few minutes brought us within view of the ruins of old Fort Ticonderoga; and under the shadows of its crumbled walls we ate our mid-day lunch. Passing southward, we had on our right Mount Defiance, whose heavily-timbered summit has trembled under the discharge of artillery; while on the far distant left rose Mount Mansfield, a majestic sentinel over the fertile country at its base. Hurrah! here comes a breeze; and gladly do we avail ourselves of it; cooling influences, as the sun has been having it all its own way since early morning. The paddle is laid aside, and the white sails spread, and on we go, until we reach Gurley's Grove, the one available camp site between Ticonderoga and Whitehall. It is on the west shore of the lake, seven miles south of "Fort Ti." This we select for our camp. Our after-supper pipe being disturbed by the ever restless mosquito, we arrange the canoes for sleeping in, and, anchored a few feet off shore, sleep the sleep of the tired canoeist.

A paddle of twenty miles the next day through an uninteresting country brought us to within two miles of Whitehall. While preparing our supper over a small fire, some young men hailed us with the pleasing intelligence that the rocks about us were "alive

with rattlesnakes, and that the building, about one hundred feet above us, was a magazine filled with powder." At any other time we might have evacuated, but tired nature told us to stay; and we live to tell the tale. The following morning we entered the Champlain Canal, to follow its tortuous course, sixty-five miles to West Troy, N. Y. The canal is fed by the Hudson River at Glens Falls, and again at a point between Fort Edward and Fort Miller Falls. The canoeist who is bound south, must go up stream until he reaches the mouth of the Glens Falls feeder, about two miles north of Fort Edward, when he will strike the current to the southward and have the fall in his favor to the end of the canal. Canal canoeing is unromantic generally, but a trip through this one carries one through many localities dear to the American heart. First we came to the ancient and famous town of Fort Edward, and at dusk of the twenty-third of August, coming to Schuylerville, we hauled ashore our canoes on the site of Fort Schuyler, at the mouth of Fish Creek, the outlet of Saratoga Lake. Here we spent several days, visiting the historic ground on which Burgoyne's army laid down their arms to the American forces.

On the afternoon of the first day of September, the voyagers again dipped their paddles into the waters of the canal and headed the canoes to the southward. At Waterford we emerged from the canal into the Mohawk River, about half a mile below the Cohoes or Great Falls. The Champlain and Erie canals form a junction at West Troy, and we here turned our

faces westward and entered the unpoetical channel of commerce. The Erie is here provided with a series of eighteen locks in a distance of about four miles; to avoid these we made a portage of a mile to Lock Eighteen, at Cohoes. On Sunday evening we passed through Schenectady and made our camp on the heel path of the canal on the outskirts of the city. When pitching the tent a storm with heavy peals of thunder and vivid flashes of lightning, poured a deluge of rain down upon us. While lying down enjoying the after supper pipe, a party of three footpads were attracted by the light of our lantern. "Let's clean them out 'o there" we heard one of them say, to which the others seemed to give a silent assent. On their approach they were hailed in a friendly manner and invited to come in out of the rain. Throwing the tent flap aside, they beheld the occupants, one cleaning a huge bowie-knife and the other oiling a Colt's revolver. The spokesman of the trio, after staring at us for an instant, "cleaned out" his pipe and then said, "Say, boss, give me a pipe of tobacco, will you?" Evidently a view of our armament dispelled any desire on their part to act on the offensive.

After a night of almost continuous rain, the morning broke clear and bright with a gentle breeze from the west. Notwithstanding our precautions some of our cargo had got damp, not to say wet, and about eleven o'clock, coming to a spot of clean greensward, we decided to halt, and while Barnacle* was preparing the ingredients for a stew, I built a fire-place of

*The cognomen by which my companion was known during the voyage.

the stones lying at hand, and then busied myself with spreading the tent, blankets, etc., on the grass to dry and air. While thus engaged I heard a sharp report from the galley, and beheld Barnacle in the act of performing a war dance around the fire and the various cooking utensils, which lay scattered about. "What's the matter with you, Barnacle?" "Matter! Can't you see? You built this fireplace of limestones, and they have burst and knocked our stew and coffee all to smithereens; after this I'll build my own fire-places." "All right, old man, have it your own way, you may live the longer for it." Soon after my spread of tent, sails and blankets, etc., attracted the attention of a passing canal boat captain, who called out to his cook, "I say, Maria, here we've come on an Irish wash day.'

Having once more packed the canoes, we started on what proved to be a hard afternoon's work against a wind that came in such strong gusts that we were driven to an early camp. Notices of our expedition and our intended route had got in o the papers, and the canalmen had, of course, heard of it, so that it was not an unusual occurrence for us to be hailed with the questions: "Say, boss, you the fellers that's goin' round the world? How long's it goin' ter take yer? Better not steal any ducks 'long the canal, or ye'll git inter the County House," etc.

A pleasant word to the canal engineer as we met him was generally a safeguard against his suddenly slackening his towline as we were passing under it, thus saving us from the risk of an upset. We were

now passing through the lovely valley of the Mohawk River, and at one point we came to an ancient stone building which had been a stockaded fort in Revolutionary days, but now bore the sign, "Canal Grocery. Best Spring Water in the Mohawk Valley." At Canajoharie we received from the brow of a high hill on our left the hail, "Canoe ahoy," and soon the wee craft were safely housed and their skippers were introduced to the comforts of the substantial brick mansion of one of Canajoharie's oldest and most influential citizens. A pleasant evening was spent with our host, and it was with no little surprise that we heard the town clock toll out the hour of midnight. At my request, a large roomy tent had been pitched on the broad lawn before the house for our sleeping apartment, and to this we repaired, to the no little discomfort of the kind-hearted, motherly hostess, who could not understand why we preferred a bed on the sweet, soft grass to the luxuries of a well-appointed bedroom. The following day we visited the locality whence comes the name Canajoharie, or "The-pot-that-washes-itself." Here is a hole cut in the rock of solid slate, twenty feet in diameter. With its vertical walls it resembles a large well. No doubt the cascade, now a quarter of a mile above, was at one time directly over it, and the falling waters, rolling flint stones and pebbles in the soft slate rock, gradually wore this well-like cavity.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH ARE SET FORTH THE DELIGHTS OF CANOEING ON A CANAL.

AGAIN we launched our craft, and accompanied by our host in his canoe, the Souvenir, paddled to Fort Plain, and then on several miles, until a noon-day halt, when the Souvenir turned her head again to the eastward. As a rule, we are careful not to camp too near a large town, but we reached Rome before finding a suitable site for the night, and long after dark, paddling between tall, somber warehouses, we approached the locks. The gleam of the lock lamps revealed us to a lounging, who imparted the information that "the level above us was full of eastern-bound boats, and that the lock-tender said we must wait until they had passed down." The judicious use of a nickel was an "open sesame," and in ten minutes' time we were shooting out of the lock into the darkness beyond. The lock-tender's story was simply a scheme by which to gain a nickel. At Syracuse we were pleasantly entertained over night by Mr. Charles F. Earle, a member of my club.

At noon, the next day, while hauling my canoe from the water, I fell and dislocated my thumb. This necessitated a camp until the injured member could be nursed back to a condition of usefulness. The morning of the third day after the accident I was awakened by the calling of some men on the tow-path; and taking a peep out of the tent, I aroused Barnacle with the cry, "Why, the water is all out of the canal." "Yes," said a passing man, "you bet it's all out, and what is more, it won't soon be in again." Sure enough, a few hundred yards above us, the bottom had fallen out of an old, rotten wooden aqueduct, just as two boats were passing, and the tremendous suction of the water had drawn both of them into the enormous breach thus made; one going down stern foremost twenty feet to the bottom of the creek below, while the other was broken in two amidships and doubled up like a jack-knife. In the bow of the first boat a mule was crying piteously for help, but no one there could devise a way for getting the poor brute out of his submerged quarters. My companion, an old sailor, with his many devices for rigging, now became valuable. Barnacle, directing one man to do this and another that, soon had a derrick rigged, and a few minutes later the mule was seen dangling by the neck, his heels flying as though the air was filled with canal drivers. Dropped to the soft mud bottom of the canal he soon scrambled to the bank above, and having taken a roll, hee-hawed out his approbation of the efforts to save his life.

Here was a dilemma; for four miles to the east and

sixteen miles to the west of us the canal presented the appearance of a creek at low tide. We were hemmed in on the west by the broken aqueduct, on the north by the almost dry canal, and on the east and south by a dense growth of alders. Half the day was spent by Barnacle in procuring a team with which to make a portage to Onondaga Lake, four miles away. Barnacle came shortly after noon with two teams, and a road having been cut through the alders, the canoes were hauled out to the waiting wagons, and we were off in search of water. The lake was reached; we parted from the kind friends who refused to be compensated for their trouble, and paddled out on the dark waters of Onondaga. The outlet into Seneca River was found without trouble and we were borne on its almost glassy current toward the city of Oswego. On an island near the junction of the Seneca and Oswego we camped.

The next day, Sunday, our washing hung up to dry, attracted the attention of a man from the opposite side of the river.

"Hello boys, fishing?"

"No."

"Hunting?"

"No."

"Jest havin' a good time eh? They was a party camped here last summer, and three of us fellows came over to visit them and we all got drunk. Got any whisky?"

"No."

"Goin' to stay here all night?"

"Yes."

"Well, I'll bring some of the boys over to-night, and we'll have a good time."

Now I had had a good time on the canal nursing my thumb, and I did not care to have any more of it, so before the sun went down we had passed into the canal and through the town of Fulton, and its wondering knots of spectators who had gathered to witness the passage of the "little ships" through the locks, thus giving our would-be entertainers the slip, and adding ten miles to our cruise. The Oswego Canal runs along the bank of the river, here and there utilizing the river itself by building a series of dams that cause slack water. In time of a spring freshet I believe a canoeist could run his canoe through to the mouth of the river with but two or three short carries, but we found it necessary to follow the course for the greater part of the distance.

At mid-day, September 18, we passed under the bridge that spans the Oswego in the harbor of the Flour City. A large steam tug was lying near the breakwater lighthouse, and I hailed the pilot: "Captain, can we get out at the west end of the breakwater?" "No, you must go out around the lighthouse if you want to go up the lake." Outside we went. Oh, what a relief! What a contrast to the great Erie Canal, with its dead dogs, cats and mules, is this great swelling inland sea, with its heaving waters, rolling over the breakwater and dashing the white spray high up against the lighthouse. It was nine miles to the only point at which we could land

with any degree of safety, and then only through the breaking surf, rolling continuously on the stony shores. Barnacle said: "I am an old salt-water sailor, and have never had a very high regard for these inland seas, but were it not that I know this water to be fresh, I could readily imagine myself on the sea." After having paddled about ten miles, my invalid thumb became so painful that I decided to beach the canoes. This was accomplished without taking any water on board. We made our camp for the night in a picturesque grove.

During the night I was roused from a sound sleep by a noise resembling a tornado, and a moment later the tent came down with a rush about our heads, leaving us to scramble out as best we could, to find that a herd of cattle, stampeded by some dogs, had come upon us, and tripping over the guy ropes, brought our house about our ears. Fortunately the canoes were out of their track, or the result might have been damaging to the expedition. As it was four o'clock, we did not pitch the tent again, but prepared breakfast, and by six o'clock had succeeded in launching our craft through the wild waves, not, however, without shipping some water. All about us there were indications of the approach of a severe storm. The entrance to little Sodus Bay was a mile distant. To reach this before the storm broke we bent all our energies. Hurriedly we hauled the canoes out on shore and pitched the tent over them. No sooner was this accomplished than the gale struck us with all its fury, compelling us to stand for two

hours, holding on to the poles, that we might prevent the tent's being blown into the bay beyond us. The storm continued three days, making it impossible for us to launch our canoes, and finally it was decided to make a portage by railway track twenty-two miles to the Erie Canal. Midnight found us at the railroad station at Weedsport, an eighth of a mile from the canal. We fastened a couple of boards to the bottom of each craft, and hauled away, over the railroad tracks and down a steep incline into the canal. We paddled on into the night, passing a line of boats three miles in length, waiting for the repair of the broken aqueduct. It was not until near daylight that we found a spot on the heel path side where we could haul our canoes out and turn into them for a little refreshing sleep. A heavy rain storm, accompanied by a high wind, broke upon us shortly after daylight, and we thanked our stars that we were not on Ontario's troubled waters. The following night we camped on the canal bank, and toward morning were awakened by some heavy article falling on the roof of our tent. A moment after two half-naked bipeds rushed out into the fog to find a knight of the towpath, on the opposite side of the canal, pelting stones at our domicile. Two, and in this case three, could play at that game; and it must have been a ludicrous sight, that of two disciples of the paddle, *sans culotte*, pelting stones at the towpath fiend sheltered behind his moving fortification of three mules. This duty attended to, we set about preparing our breakfast, and by five o'clock were afloat.

The monotony of canal navigation was relieved now and then by conversations with the officers of the canal boats, and the commandants of the mule teams. Of course, we received much chaff, especially at the locks, where such questions as "Where yer boun', boss?" "How much does such a boat cost?" "Where's yer cook?" "Goin' roun' the world?" "Aint yer doin' it on a bet?" "How do yer make any money out of it any way?" Now and then we would come across a gentleman who would be in thorough sympathy with us, and who would chat pleasantly of the route and on the canoeing literature of the day. One little boy told me he had read Macgregor's and Bishop's books, and some day he hoped to make a canoe voyage and write an account of it.

Three hundred and thirty-three miles of paddling on this canal had now brought us to the mountain of masonry at Lockport, the greatest feat of engineering skill on the entire length of the canal. After traveling over a level of sixty miles, we here struck the mountain ridge, over which the canal is carried by five combination locks, each twelve feet deep by one hundred in length.

Three days more and we were at the end of the monotonous canal journey of nearly four hundred miles, and paddled out into the clear waters of Lake Erie, and around under the long wharves and towering warehouses of Buffalo. In less time than it takes me to write it, we were surrounded by a horde of wharf rats in all descriptions of water craft, from the dry-goods box to the shapely ship's yawl, who

gathered about us, pushing and hauling, swearing and fighting to see who could get the nearest to us, and offering all sorts of advice. One bright-eyed, curly-headed little fellow offered me fifty cents for the pulp hat that I wore, while another warned me "not to get too near the paddle wheels of the steamer near which I had drifted, as, if the engine should start up, the wheels would grind my little boat to pieces. I afterward learned that there was no engine in this vessel, and there had not been for several years. On the wharf had collected a crowd of several hundreds to witness the landing of the "little ships," and it required the aid of two policemen to force them back and open a way through which the canoes were carried to the warerooms of a friend. Here they were visited by hundreds of people during the three days of our stay. The canoes attracted no small amount of attention on the day succeeding our arrival as we sailed about among a crowd of boats and yachts assembled to witness a rowing match in the harbor. On my arrival in Buffalo I was induced to make a change in my route, owing to the tempestuous weather on Lake Erie, and to make a portage of seventy-two miles to Olean, N. Y., near the headwaters of the Allegheny River. I was loth to do this, as it would deprive me of the pleasure of meeting some canoeing friends at Cleveland, Ohio; but as the season was rapidly advancing, I could not risk being detained on the shores of the lake by storms.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH IS SHOWN THE BENEVOLENT NATURE OF
BARK-PEELERS.

"YOU can't go down the river in your little boats, mister," said a man to me as we were unloading the canoes from the freight car at Olean.

"Why?"

"Cause they ain't water enough."

Oh, my canoeing brothers, have you ever been placed in a similar situation? Have you ever experienced that feeling of alloverishness that comes upon one after he has made a portage of many miles to find water, and then is told that "they ain't water enough?" However, we found this man mistaken; there was water enough. At two o'clock we portaged to the river and said good-bye to Olean, and our bonny craft were headed toward the Gulf of Mexico, more than 2,600 miles away. We had now left behind us the great water shed that drains into the Atlantic via the chain of great lakes, the swiftly flowing St. Lawrence and the noble Hudson, and were on the southern shed, which pours its waters into the Gulf of Mexico by the mighty Mississippi. About five .

miles below our starting point a cleared space of the high bank induced us to camp, just as stray drops of rain came pattering on our decks. In our dunage we had a "watch tackle," a miniature of what is used on large sailing vessels, and by which the watch on deck may alter the position of the ponderous spars without the aid of the watch below. By this we hauled the loaded canoes to the top of the bank, and soon had them under shelter with their skippers.

We had now started down the Ohio's northern tributary, which takes its rise in northern Pennsylvania, but whose winding course leads it across a large area of the State of New York, when it again enters Pennsylvania, through which it winds until it joins its waters with those of the Monongahela, forming the Ohio at Pittsburgh. The night was passed without rain, but a heavy fog enveloped everything the following morning.

The smoke from our breakfast fire, settling to the ground, attracted the attention of a bark-peeler on his way to the cutting, and with the remark that "Thet ere bacon smells good," he put in an appearance, and gave the welcome intelligence that in less than five miles we would find the water having a depth of three feet, and five miles beyond that point, we could hoist sails and go to Pittsburgh without an obstruction. For this good news we could not help but feel grateful, and we gladly invited the bark-peeler to stand by and join us in a slice of the sizzling bacon; and afterward he sat by the fire and

smoked a pipe of our tobacco, the while relating his experiences of life on a raft. The fog lifting, we pushed off, and with light hearts renewed our course. Why should not our hearts have been light? Had we not reached that point below which there was an uninterrupted course to the Gulf? Why had that fellow at Olean warned us that before we had gone many miles we would find very little water? He evidently knew nothing of the river, but our companion at breakfast had "rafted the river since he was knee-high to a grasshopper," and was thoroughly familiar with it, "knew every stone and snag in it." To him we felt so grateful that we parted with one of our last two plugs of fine smoking tobacco. Why should we not? Had he not relieved our minds of the impression that we must again "look for water," and make another long portage perhaps?

The river bed had now widened to a breadth of at least five hundred feet, and the banks had lowered to a height of a few feet only. The current was sweeping us along at a delightful speed on the smooth, unbroken surface, when all at once our ears were greeted by the sound of falling waters. A dam? No, it could not be that; but in less than a minute we found our canoes hard aground on the gravelly bottom of the river. This was at about the point where we were to find the water so deep that we could not "touch the bottom with our long paddles," and could "hoist our sails and go down without interruption." As far ahead as our vision extended was one continuous rift, with an average depth of

three inches of water. There are two ways of getting out of such a difficulty; we could get a team and carry around, or track, *i. e.*, haul the canoe along on the bottom, through the rocks and stones. The latter was our only alternative. Having made fast one of the stout masts to the end of the painter, we jumped overboard and hauled away. It was tremendously hard work, especially when the gravel had got on the wrong side of the wading shoe. Now and then we struck a channel, where the water was an inch or two deeper, and gave us a respite by floating the canoe for a short distance. More than half a mile of this kind of "paddling" had been put in before we found sufficient depth of water. The banks had now become higher and the stream narrower and deeper. Finally we resumed our places, and Barnacle expressed the feeling of both when he said: "I'd give something to have that lying, tobacco-chewing raftsman by the throat for five minutes; I'd give him something by which he'd remember this sail."

Having run about three miles in a channel hardly sufficient to float us, we suddenly came upon deeper water, while our ears caught the sound of falling water and the harsh screech of circular saws, as we came into view of an extensive board camp, with immense sawmills. Stopping at the camp store, we purchase a box of grapes and replenish our stock of tobacco, and then haul the canoes over the boom, which is stretched athwart the river, and go on to the low dam, a few hundred feet below, over which we jump our canoes, without even so much as wet-

ting their decks, and have left Bullis City, Pa., with its screeching saws, behind us.

The river bed now broadens and the depth of water is lessened, and again we resort to tracking. Two days later, at Corydon, we come upon the second dam in our course, it having a height of about seven feet, with a broad apron. As this is Sunday, almost the entire flow is rushing over the dam at one wing. We drop the canoes to the pool at the foot of the apron. Cautiously easing the Aurora toward the edge, so that I can get a secure foothold, I take a turn with the stern painter about a projecting log and ease her down until she is within the strength of the current, then let go all, and she darts into the boiling waters and bobs up serenely at the edge of the ledge of rocks. Barnacle prepares his craft for the plunge, and having got her fore and aft the rush of water, lets go all; and as she shakes herself in the sudsy waters, he remembers that he forgot to make fast his only pair of shoes, which had been drying on the deck. With some difficulty we get into a store, but Barnacle meets with a bitter disappointment—his foot is too long by an inch for the longest shoes in the town, and he must go barefooted until we strike a longer-shoed place. Rounding the extremity of an island, we come without any warning upon a third dam at Salamanca. The water of the river is divided and led through a canal, and is again emptied into the river a short distance below.

Our arrival seemed to have been telegraphed over the town, and in a few moments a score of small

boys, with their chums, had assembled on the bridge, a few yards below the dam, and manifested much interest as to how we would overcome the obstacle. Fortunately there was a dry chute for rafts at an angle of twenty degrees, and it was easy to slide the canoes into the deep pool at its foot. Here we had not more than three inches of depth, and another haul-over was necessary. The bottom here was filled with large stones and gravel, therefore the damage to the planking of our frail craft would be serious if coming in contact with the stones. We cleared a channel by rolling the large stones to one side and digging into the gravel for a hundred and fifty yards. Then we reached the bridge; and here we had to remove, in addition to the stones, three thousand and seventy empty corned-beef cans, other thousands of sweet corn and Boston baked bean cans, while one side of our channel was built up with thousands of sardine, deviled tongue, turkey, chicken and ham boxes, to say nothing of barrels of broken glassware, old stoves and decaying vegetable matter, together with the inevitable dead cat. The remarks of the gathered populace were highly entertaining, and the advice showered down upon us would fill pages. But it became our turn to laugh when we had completed our labors and hauled the canoes into the canal, broke away the little dam at its head, and the rush of water carried our barks down to the deep pool below the bridge, where we again boarded them and waved an adieu to the consumers of canned goods, to whom we had afforded so much amusement.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH WE HAVE AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE INDIANS.

THE amount of water is daily increasing, thus lessening our fears for the safety of our canoe bottoms and doing away with the probability of a carry. The intricacies of the channel have now become a matter of much study; first the channel will shoot to the center of the river, and then as suddenly double back on itself to the opposite shore. All its windings must be followed or we go aground, and an enforced wetting of feet follows. Islands are now becoming numerous, and often we find ourselves on the wrong side and are compelled to get overboard and track back in order to make the main channel, down which we often rush not more than two boats' lengths apart. It frequently happens that the foremost canoe may not make the necessary sharp turn to right or left, and consequently goes aground; then the companion boat comes down with a rush, and things are for a moment or two in a rather mixed up condition.

Again the sound of falling waters is borne to our ears, and in a moment more we go shooting down

the incline, with a knock on the starboard bilge and then one on the port side, followed by a rolling stone under the canoe bottom which feels as though it had come through her planking. We round to for the night's camp, and soon the fire for frying our bacon and boiling water for our coffee is blazing brightly, while we are preparing our couches for the night's rest, which we have honestly earned. Since starting on the cruise I have devised and made of ordinary unbleached sheeting, a little shelter tent. One of the painters is stretched from mainmast to mizzen as a ridge, the little tent is drawn over it and fastened to small screws beneath the gunwale of the canoe. This tent, although of such light fabric, did not leak a drop during the entire cruise. A thunder storm broke upon us with flashes and crashes that were terrifying, and did away with the possibility of sleeping. Nevertheless, I, at least, was comfortable, snugly rapped in my blankets, while the canoe tent covered her entire length and breadth, thus protecting from wet or injury not only the crew but the cargo. No bright sun greets us on the morrow, but a steady down-pour of rain, accompanied by a strong wind. Do we get wet? Oh, no; we don our oil-skin suits, and with sou'wester covering the head and rubbers the feet, we defy the rain and the mud. We cut two poles and pitch our large fly near to the canoes, and build a little fire at the leeward end just within the shelter of the tent. The building of the fire is facilitated by the use of some small slivers of fat pine, a stock of which we have never been with-

out since starting. With the fire at the leeward end of the tent, a draft is made and all smoke carried off, leaving us to enjoy the comforts of a roomy tent, as we are seated on the camp chests taken from the canoes. Let the rain pour, we are comfortable; everything is under cover, we have even picked up enough drift boards and slabs to partially floor our house. Barnacle sings a "shanty," "Rolling down from old Mohea." He is good at that; his life of twenty years on the ocean has perfected him in the art of shanty singing and yarn spinning. What with singing, story telling, bringing up the log to date, etc., the morning is comfortably, even pleasantly passed, and noon is upon us ere we are aware of it. There is usually a change in a storm between eleven and two o'clock. "Between eleven and two it will tell you what it will do," is the old saying. By the time our mid-day meal was finished the rain had ceased and old Sol was sending his rays through the cracks in the clouds. As the rain has been heavy, the chances are very favorable for a rise in the river, so we concluded to pack up and look for a camp on higher ground. There is no tracking to do now, but a push off into the current and away we go on water which is from ten to twenty inches deep.

We have not passed the region of rifts yet, for there is one less than a quarter of a mile ahead of us, and now we are at its head. It is more of a fall than we anticipated. One can see for a long distance down hill and then lose sight of the river as it passes around the base of the mountain. We have

now run into a spur of the Allegheny range, and dark evergreen-covered summits can be seen for long distances in all directions. Ha! what is this coming up the river, through the very swiftest part of the rift? A canoe, beyond all doubt. A nearer view discloses a craft of the aboriginal type—a pine dug-out of no mean model, with fine lines and an exceedingly smooth skin. It is poled up the swift current by an Indian. I hail him. No reply comes from his firmly-closed lips, but instead a look of curiosity overspreads his countenance as he holds his canoe fore and aft the current. I venture another question. Still no reply. I can hardly believe he does not understand me. I whistle to a small dog seated in the bow of his canoe, evidently as much interested in the strange craft before him as his silent master. "How much will you take for the dog?" I ask. "Ten dollars; want to buy him?" The prospect of a sale opens his lips. But he evidently sees by my manner that I have not ten dollars to throw away on a worthless cur, and throwing his weight into his push, goes on up stream, now and then making a thrust at a fish with his pole, at one end of which, I now discover, he has a spear. Three miles further on we came across a group of Indians practicing at a mark with a rifle, and I am reminded of times gone by, as a bullet sings uncomfortably near me as it flies to its distant mark across the river. Soon I am surrounded by a horde of "Corn Planter" Indians, curious to inspect the little boat. They express much astonishment when told that this is a canoe, and say, "Funny

can-o." These were the descendants of the Seneca' Gy-aut-wa-chia, the Corn Planter, principal chief of the Six Nations from the Revolution to 1836, when he died at the age of about one hundred years

The day being now far advanced, a camp was made at the mouth of Bear Creek, and we decided to make an early start on the morrow that we might reach Warren before dark. No tent was pitched; we rolled ourselves in our blankets, and with feet to the fire, were soon oblivious of all surroundings. A bright, crisp air kisses my cheeks and tingles the end of my nose as I kick aside the blankets in the morning, just at the crack o' day, and discover that the rain of yesterday and the previous night has added at least two inches to the height of the river. This is encouraging; every inch helps. Before the sun had gilded the summit of the mountains we were five miles below our last night's bivouac Barnacle spies something moving below us, and we rest on our paddles to watch it, as we drift silently down It has a young one by its side. It is a bear, beyond doubt, as we can now see it traveling on all fours, as it roots among the grasses and weeds along the bank of the stream for its morning meal. The young one meanwhile is standing on its haunches, and seems to be gnawing something which it holds in its paws As we have nothing heavier than a .32-caliber revolver, in the shape of shooting-irons, we decide not to attack bruin, but putting all our strength into our strokes, to come upon her suddenly and witness her terrified retreat. With a yell we approach her. Now

we are within a hundred yards of her. She does not flee, but slowly turning her head, gives us one glance and then resumes her grubbing. Our bear proved to be an Indian woman digging roots to be used for medicinal purposes, and the cub is a small boy eating the skin off some herb plant.

A moment more and our thoughts are diverted from land to water, as our boats are drawn at a lively pace through a narrow channel close under the high, rock-bound bank on our left, while at the right there is a low island fringed with willows, whose boughs almost touch the water. Down we go as though through a mill race, when the channel suddenly shoots across to the island, and before one can think I am swept under the overhanging branches, when off goes my hat and then a loose hatch, and unable longer to use the paddle, owing to the low branches, I find my canoe brought up with a bang against a log. Barnacle sees this, and profiting by my experience goes flying past free from all obstructions, and a moment more I see him sweep around a bend and he is lost to view. Five minutes are spent in recovering the hat and hatch, and I am off after Barnacle. There he is, just around the bend, but what on earth is he doing? Tracking as sure as he's alive, for he has missed an abrupt turn in the channel and is on a bar. It is now my turn to profit by his experience.

I keep to the left and am swept along at race-horse speed. Whew! Look at the boulders, their black heads showing above the surface in all directions.

Where is the channel? I don't know, and there is no chance to stop now and study the current, I must go where it carries me and trust to luck to get out safely. I catch sight of two big boulders with their heads reared above the foaming waters at the base; I must avoid them if possible; quick, or it will be too late; a strong stroke to starboard is followed by a quick back stroke to port, but it is no use, and as the spray flies into my face, blinding me for a moment, I am swept down the current through the whitened water past numberless rocks of all sizes, just missing that one and slightly touching this, until I come upon the two big fellows that are right in our course. I can't avoid them both, I must strike one or the other of them and then over I go. One hand drops its hold on the paddle and grasps the stern painter just as she strikes her starboard bilge on the lower rock. I make a leap for its slimy surface as the canoe swings broad side on, and find myself up to my armpits in the water; the force carries my feet from under me, and canoe and captain go down stream together, tossed about by the savage waters and banged against the merciless rocks until we reached the pool at the foot of the rapid, some hundred yards below. I climb out on a flat rock in mid pool, and looking up the hill down which I have made such good time, see Barnacle among the rocks, his canoe rocking and rolling, the spray flying from her bow as she comes down off a sea as though she were a thing of life. She is heading directly for the rocks. I wave my hand frantically to the left, but too late; he does not even see

me; and the next instant the Comfort is high out, almost full length on the rock, her skipper sitting silently viewing the situation. He knows what to do, he has been in the same sort of a fix before. Carefully holding the canoe with one hand, with paddle and stern painter in the other, he steps out upon the rock and eases his craft off, and as she swings clear, nimbly springs aboard and in a moment is by my side. Together we smoke our pipes as we drift quietly along the smooth current.

As the sun hides behind the mountain we are off on a fairly fast current, which sooner than we had expected brings us in sight of the town. A hail from the shore, "Are you the men as is goin' to the Gulf of Mexico?" is answered in the affirmative; and while we gulf-bound paddlers get overboard and haul over a bar, our interlocutor goes toward as fast as his legs will carry him. Over the bar, we are again in deep and slack water, and as we leisurely paddle on, are more than surprised to see a fleet of eight canoes, one of which is dexterously paddled by a lady, heading directly for us. Salutations are exchanged, and we find ourselves guests of the Warren Canoe Club. A short visit is made in the pretty town, and we bid adieu to our kind entertainers.

At Tidioute, on the following day, we lay in stores, consisting of potatoes, onions, beans, beef-steak and sausage. Here Barnacle meets an old shipmate, and in their reminiscences together they sight a whale, man the boat, give chase, harpoon and tow the monster to the ship's side, and would have set

about "cutting nim in," did not the hour demand our return to camp.

We are soon in the petroleum region; and on the river banks, and away up on the mountain sides, rise the skeleton frames of the oil derricks, with their groanings and creakings, and steam and smoke. It is in the middle of the afternoon that we pass the village of Tionesta, with its three graceful spires outlined against the dark green of the mountain. All day we have been battling against a head wind that has come in gusts so strong at times as to cause us to miss a stroke of the paddle now and then. It is raw and penetrating, and we gladly welcome a suitable location for the night's camp four miles below Tionesta. As we sit about the cheerful campfire, sheltered from the wind by a screen constructed of our sails, we are visited by two gentlemen, who entertain us with tales of the days of the "oil excitement," when to this vast region the money seekers flocked as to California in '49. To the "oil regions" men came from all parts of the world, with varying amounts of capital, and invested in oil land, oil wells, machinery, etc. Towns sprang up in a night; hotels and gambling saloons were built; oil exchanges established; mercantile houses opened; theaters and dens of vice planted. By night and day, on all sides, was to be heard the sound of hammer and saw. The laws of State and society were set at defiance, and riot and bloodshed were of almost daily occurrence. Pointing to the opposite side of the stream, one of our visitors said: "Do you see that

fine residence, with its graveled drives, bordered by the well-kept hedge? Do you notice the substantial outbuildings, the general air of prosperity and comfort? The owner of that place was poor—poor as a man and poor as a farmer, when the oil excitement reached this locality. Oil was found on his farm, and lots were bought at fabulous prices, until his entire farm was sold in small lots and bored full of holes. He became the possessor of an immense fortune, and now he is enjoying it, a prudent and benevolent man. Now there is a man on Oil Creek, who one morning found himself elevated from following the plow to the possession of hundreds of thousands of dollars.. Before one short year had flown by, he had squandered the entire fortune with evil companions, in gambling dens and profligacy. To-day he is working for thirty dollars a month."

On the morrow we launch and go dashing down grade, facing a cold, drizzling rain that feels as though it would penetrate to the very marrow, and makes the hands ache and fingers tingle as if the paddle were a bar of ice. But we push on. Every day is of importance to us now. We can afford to loiter a little after we have reached the balmy atmosphere of the South and have left behind us the frost-laden winds of the North. After a five hours' run, a portion of which was through some lively but easy rapids, we sight the tall spires and chimneys of Oil City. It had not been my intention to stop here; the water front of a busy town has few attractions for a stranger canoeist; but wrong judgment caused

us to follow a channel which terminated at a bar directly opposite the center of the city, and our introduction to its citizens was made in bare feet, with trousers rolled to the knee, as we hauled the canoes over the bar with its accumulation of rubbish, which is scarcely less than that of Salamanca. I slip and narrowly escape a fall upon the oily landing-plank below the railroad bridge, and make my way through a crowd of curious spectators, leaving Barnacle to tell them the story of our adventures. After receiving congratulations and good wishes, we strike for the opposite shore, and are almost immediately caught in the current, now augmented by the black and oily waters of Oil Creek.

CHAPTER V.

OIL ON THE TROUBLED WATERS.

THE increased volume of water sets at rest fears of being compelled to portage, that most disagreeable of all alternatives to the average canoeist. We can no longer loo'k over the side of our canoes and see beneath the long grasses as they sway to and fro and bend with the current; nor watch the fish as they hold themselves against the swiftly flowing stream, or dart away. All this is changed now, and the kaleidoscopic effect is on the surface of the water, which is covered with an unruffled layer of oil, the leakage from hundreds of wells and tanks from the mouth far up to the headwaters of Oil Creek, and for many miles along the river down which we have come. It has a beautiful effect, with the sun shining upon it, the broken clouds, the high hills and densely wooded banks are all reflected in the many hues of the rainbow, while little billows of gold roll away from the bow of the canoe as she quietly cuts her course. This effect, pleasant to the eye as it is, has a most disagreeable effect on the senses of smell and feeling. All creation hereabouts

is coated with oil; and soon the paddles, canoes and even the clothing of the crews are besmeared and discolored by it. It penetrates the canvas uppers of the rubber-soled slippers and eats its way into the pores of one's skin. We gather wood for the fire, but when lighted, it sends up a heavy volume of black smoke, which, falling through the damp atmosphere, covers all things with a soot that tattoos face and hands until they resemble an Indian's. We cover up the frying bacon and baking johnnycake. Nevertheless, in spite of all precautions, the food tastes of petroleum, as we handle it with oil-impregnated and soot-stained fingers.

The 13th of October dawns, with all things enveloped in an almost impenetrable fog, and we are forced to remain, fog-bound, in camp until 9 o'clock, for the danger of running rapid and unknown waters at such a time is too great to permit our launching. Finally the fog lifts, and we are again on the waters, and fly down a short rapid into a smooth reach, and come upon a scene of desolation and ruin, such as has never before met my eye. Before us is a large village of decaying buildings with tottering chimneys, regularly laid out streets and board walks, even the remains of a railroad depot, but no sign of life save one small column of smoke which issues from a rusty stovepipe thrust through the gable end of a barn-like building. Here, something less than twenty years ago, the oil prospector had sunk his well and "struck oil." Within a week, men had flocked to the new oil region; a surveyor had laid out a town;

lots had been sold; roads had been cut, and by day and night the work of putting down wells went on. Buildings were erected; families moved in; hotels, stores and a bank were opened, and a railroad was constructed. In less than a month the wooded point had been transformed into a flourishing town. On all sides rose the tall derricks; long trains of cars came laden with empty barrels and carried them away again filled with oil. But this very site is to-day one of ruin and desolation. We see only buildings with sashless windows, doorless entrances, their decayed piazzas supporting saplings that have forced themselves in their vigorous growth through the rotting timbers. The straight, broad streets are overgrown with briars and bushes. Nothing of the railroad remains but the caved in embankment. The overflow of the river has undermined the depot, which now lies a mass of ruins. All this because new oil regions have been discovered where production can be carried on at much less cost than here, and thither the inhabitants of the mushroom town have flown. This is the history of Reno. It is an example of leaving a good thing for a better.

Again we hear the musical sound of falling waters, and prepare for the little foam-flecked waves that are to wash our decks, and make a mild attempt to wrench the paddle from our grasp. It is little more than a rift and is divided by an island at the foot. Barnacle, standing in his canoe, surveys the course ahead of us and will take the right side of the island, believing there is more water there, but I prefer the

left side, possibly because I am nearer that shore; and we separate, each going his own way. I leisurely paddling along pay little heed to my surroundings. I discover that my boat is being rapidly drawn close in shore so that the overhanging bushes prevent me from using my paddle, and I am conscious that I am being swept along at a rate that is dangerous should my boat come in contact with an obstruction. On through the overhanging branches I go until a clear space allows me to use the paddle for a backward stroke or two to gain time for a survey of the course ahead; but the powerful current has me within its grasp and I go shooting down an incline walled on either side by logs and planks which reach above my head. I am deafened by the roar of falling water, and an instant more the Aurora leaps into space and dives head first into a whirling, boiling pool, the waters of which are forced along the deck until they strike the Captain full in the face and against my paddle with such force as to wrench it from my hands, leaving me trembling with excitement and concern at its loss. Grasping a hatch, I manage to throw the canoe's head around in time to catch the truant double blade as it is being whirled about by the eddy, and in a twinkling I force the Aurora's bow against the yielding gravel bank. Where am I? What have I done? It requires some seconds for me to comprehend the situation. It frequently happens on streams of the character of the Allegheny River, that short dams are built connecting one side of an island with the mainland at a suitable mill site, the overflow

going down on the opposite side of the island. At the foot of an old dam of this description I now find myself. I have been shot through the disused race-way. Fortunate for you, Aurora, that there were no iron spikes projecting from the sides of that narrow passage, nor huge rocks at the mouth, or you would have had your nose bruised to say the least of it.

Half a mile below, around a short bend, I find Barnacle with a bright fire blazing, while he is engaged in pitching the tent. "Why, Doctor, have you been lost? I was just thinking of going in search of you." I don't tell him about the dam and race-way, I reserve the narration of that experience until some time when I want to amuse him.

The tent pitched, the canoes are placed beneath its shelter, and I haul out from beneath the deck the bag containing the vegetables; a half dozen potatoes, two or three onions and a like number of turnips are washed, peeled and thinly sliced, while Barnacle cuts up the small piece of pork and drops it into the boiling water, to which, after about ten minutes, is added my contribution of vegetables, and when all is well cooked we sprinkle in a handful of corn meal, stirring the mass rapidly until it is thickened, and our supper was steaming before us. Before it is fairly disposed of we are forced to beat a retreat to the shelter of the tent from the fury of a thunder shower, which comes rolling up before we realize it. It soon passes over our heads, booming and crashing. Stepping out of the tent, we lift the bread slabs that we had thrown over the fire at the storm's approach, and discover

that they have shielded the coals; and throwing on a few pieces of dry wood taken from beneath the shelter of the tent, we soon have a cheerful blaze, around which we sit and smoke our pipes, and then rolling in the warm blankets are soon snoring away with such force that each is awakened and charging the other with disturbing his rest. It is not until ten o'clock the following morning that the thick fog lifts sufficiently to allow our putting off in safety, but before mid-day we have rambled through the streets of the oil refining town of Franklin, at the confluence of the French Creek with the Allegheny River.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH THE PADDLE IS EXCHANGED FOR A CLUB.

IT is Saturday. Sunday is the cruiser's day of rest, repairs and letter writing. We look forward to to-morrow's camp with no little degree of pleasure. By the exertions of the past week we have fully earned the rest. Here is a spot suitable for the camp, and although it is still early in the afternoon, we haul out. Here we seem to be somewhat isolated from other human beings, as we have not passed a habitation in the last hour, and there are no signs of any on the long reach ahead of us. Our camp is pitched on a sloping bank, among some very large boulders. In the rear the forest is dense; the opposite shore is very abrupt and heavily wooded to its summit with beech, birch and maple, whose brilliant leaves are just beginning to fall in the light wind that carries them sailing far out on to the bosom of the stream, whose waters are to bear them on their voyage toward the Gulf. Everything is taken out of the canoes to-night, piled in a heap and covered with a tarpaulin, and the craft are turned bottom up, preparatory to the morrow's in-

spection. Barnacle builds the fireplace. This is not often done; but as we are to remain here for more than twenty-four hours, we intend to live well, and we need a good fireplace for cooking. Barnacle hashes up half a can of corned beef with half that quantity of sweet corn, and with some onions, warms the mass over the fire. I make the tea, toast some of the stale bread, and open a can of peaches.

Our Sunday breakfast was the usual one—a can of Boston baked beans, bread and coffee. Then we set about the opening of the various packages constituting the cargo, and spreading their contents out to air, and in some instances to dry. The contents of the clothes bag were hung on the branches, the blankets were whipped, shaken and hung up to air, and then the razor was stropped and the chin shorn of its stubby accumulation of a week. Then we turned to the canoes and carefully examined their bottoms. The Aurora had come out in good shape thus far, and had but few cuts. Here and there I found a pebble firmly imbedded in her planking, and in one place a small piece of tin had been driven in and doubled over, evidently a memento of the empty cans of Salamanca. All pebbles, tin and dirt were carefully scraped away, and the cuts and dents filled in and smoothed over with beeswax, followed by a coat of boiled oil. Then she looked as if she had just come from the hands of the varnisher. Before the sunshine left them the blankets were stowed in the tent, the packages again made up, and the clothes bag packed and stowed in its accustomed

place. This was to have been a day of rest, but we had made it, thus far, one of continuous work.

We had a can of oysters among our stores, and with a little milk we might have a stew. Barnacle told me he had heard a rooster crowing down stream, so I took a kettle and started on a foraging expedition. A mile below the camp I came upon a small clearing. In the center stood a log building almost covered by vines and bushes. I opened the rickety gate which led through the rail fence, and seeing no one about, whistled to attract attention. It had immediate effect, for as I approached the low porch of the cabin, a long, lean, gaunt dog put in an appearance, looking for all the world as if he had just waked from a long sleep after a night among sheep. Catching sight of me, with a low growl and gleaming teeth, he made a spring for my throat. I dodged the attack. But the brute was as quick as I. Before I could fairly recover from my surprise he again sprang for me. I dealt him a blow with my kettle in his fiery-red eyes. As his teeth snapped in rage, I saw that, unarmed, I was no match for the vicious beast; and remembering the stick at the gate, I sprang for it, and by the time the brute could gather from the kick I had dealt him with my heavy shoe, I had a firm grip on the cudgel, and the next instant I dealt him a blow that doubled him up like a ball. Following up my success with another well-directed blow, I had him at my feet, his eyes bloodshot and tongue protruding between his teeth. Of course, with the barking and growling of the enraged brute,

and the yelling that I had kept up, the inmates of the cabin had been attracted to the scene. Oh, what a racket there was then. The old man, with long, tangled hair, tawny beard and tattered clothing, was going to "blow the head off the — tramp," while the sour-visaged skeleton of a woman at his side cursed me for my attempt on the life of her pet. We all tried to talk at once; and they gave me no chance to explain myself, but kept up their infernal din of curses and gesticulations. Meanwhile the dog had recovered from my blow, and crept to his mistress's side with his tail between his legs, looking like the whipped cur he was. He was careful to keep out of the reach of the club, which I still held in my hand. When the anger of the two scarecrows had abated somewhat, I gained a chance to explain my errand, and soon succeeded in obtaining the milk, a dozen of eggs and a cake of honey. The kettle had to undergo some manipulation in order to restore it to any resemblance to its former shape; the eggs I stowed between my shirts, first drawing my belt snugly about my waist. I tendered a silver half dollar in payment for the stores, but it was with considerable hesitation that they accepted it, first biting its edges, and then whacking it down on the table. "Thar's so many counterfeiters 'roun' now-days no one knows what money's what," said the male bundle of rags. I told him that in the country I came from we did not discriminate between good and bad coins, so long as we could see the date. But with the eggs in my shirt, the honey in one

hand and the milk in the other, how was I to carry the club? I dared not go out without it so long as the brute of a dog was at liberty; and the old heathen obstinately refused to tie him up, but he promised not to let him follow me. I eyed him closely as he lay under the table while I sneaked out of the door, and cast hurried glances over my shoulder as I made tracks for the river bank, thankful that I was out of the presence of so vicious a brute and his equally vicious-looking owners. It may have been owing to excitement produced by my recent encounter that I stumbled and fell full length over a rock on my way back to camp. I saved the honey and most of the milk; but, oh, dear! there were but eight whole eggs left when I fished them out from between my shirts.

So we had our oyster stew; and perhaps I enjoyed it all the more after such a hard fight for the milk.

CHAPTER VII.

A SCOW, A COW AND A ROW.

THE *hoo-hoo-to-hoo* of an owl wakes me at daylight, and I bound out of the tent with the agility of a young buck. How this life is strengthening wind and limb, expanding the chest and developing the muscles. Fried eggs and bacon, bread, butter and coffee constitute our breakfast, and before the sun has dried the dew on our canoe decks we are afloat. Passing the scene of my encounter of yesterday, I yell at the top of my voice, for why sneak by in fear of another attack? What fear have I now; have I not my revolver lying by my side and my heavy hunting-knife in my belt, to say nothing of the stout paddle in my hand? But he comes not, neither is there sign of life about the cabin; and we go on down between the mountains as the sun lifts his red eye over their summits. About ten o'clock we landed on the muddy shores at the town of Elmenton to mail letters. We attracted considerable attention here, for a story had gone the rounds of the local press that we were bound on a cruise around the Horn to the Golden Gate, instead of a quiet, health-seeking voyage to

the Gulf of Mexico. Much time was spent in the effort to convince two skeptics that a craft built of strips and ribs could be a canoe as well as one cut out of a log. They doubted their ability to navigate our style of canoe, and we willingly left them in that doubt.

We had a fair current and made a good run in the Indian summer day; and as the evening was so pleasant, we paddled on until night overtook us, just as we ran into a lot of jutting rocks. It had become so dark that we could barely discern the shore line, as we carefully picked our way by feeling for the bottom with our paddles. We came finally to a huge timber raft, and on this hauled out and made our camp. We pitched the large tent over the Comfort, making the bottom fast by driving pegs into the soft pine logs of the raft, while the Aurora had her own little tent buttoned down snugly to the gunwales.

Our rule, on landing for the night, is always first to prepare our sleeping arrangements, and then to get supper. To-night an occasional drop of rain warns us that we must hasten our supper and get beneath the shelter of our canvas roofs. Hardly is the tea steeped before the rain comes gently down, driving us to the shelter of our tents. Lighting my candle and setting it on the forward hatch, I convert the after hatch into a table, on which I have a steaming cup of tea, two or three good slices of bread and butter, some cold corned beef and a jar of orange marmalade. The rain is pattering gently on the canvas roof of my snug quarters, making music

pleasant to my ears. Reaching under the starboard side, pipe and tobacco are produced from the canvas pocket, and drawing from under the forward hatch a small hand bag, which contains a little of everything, I fish out a rubber-wrapped note book and jot down the events of the day. Then, stretched at full length, with head resting on the clothes-bag pillow, and while puffing away at my pipe, I enjoy the perusal of "A Sailor's Sweetheart" until, overcome by drowsiness, I "douse the glim," and wake up the next morning to find a heavy fog all about us, and Barnacle in a sputter because his tobacco has got wet and won't burn.

About nine o'clock the fog lifts a trifle, and we shoot out into the channel, which is now quite straight and has a current that carries us along at a fair speed without help from the paddle. The morning train to Oil City rattles past us through the fog as we land at East Brady to lay in a store of bread and potatoes. The mist hides our canoes from view of the loungers, and thus we escape attention, but excite suspicion that we are tramps, because of the small amount of stores we purchase, and by reason of our dilapidated appearance. By noon the sun sends a ray or two through the fog and lights up the high hilltops on the left; and in the middle of the afternoon the fog disappears, and the sun is so warm that we paddle comfortably with arms bared to the elbow and heads uncovered. We are carried around a bend, and my eyes rest upon the hamlet of Templeton, where in 1869 I spent several pleasant days, and where I sepa-

rated from a party of pleasant companions after a tramp across the mountains from the Susquehanna River. Here the Mahoning Creek adds its waters to the Allegheny and broadens the river to a quarter of a mile, while it is so straight that objects are lost to view in the distance. Opposite Templeton we came upon a rope ferry. The boat was a huge scow. It bore a cargo of household goods and a cow made fast to one of the stanchions. Perched high up on the load was a daughter of the Emerald Isle. Her interest in the strange craft coming down on the boat was so intense that she did not notice the effect our long paddles had on the nerves of her quadruped until, all of a sudden, she was tumbled to the bottom of the scow and almost spilled overboard, as the cow pulled back, upsetting a table and pulling down the chairs and a tin wash-boiler. The din of the tin boiler, the shouts of the ferryman and the screams of the woman rose on the air; while Bossy stood with head and tail erect, ready for some more rampage on the slightest provocation. "It's me thet id loik to git a whack at yez wid one o' them long poles, ye dirty divils," cried Mrs. Ireland, as we again swung the paddles and headed for Dick's Island for our camp.

Barnacle hangs the kettle over the fire, and while the water is heating, picks to pieces half a can of corned beef while I peel two onions, half a dozen potatoes and one turnip; these sliced very thin, together with the beef, are well seasoned and put into the boiling water. When thoroughly cooked

the whole is thickened with flour gravy. The mess chests form a table, on which are our cups, pannikins, knife, fork and spoon. A jar of chow-chow, can of condensed milk, can of sugar and one of honey are flanked by bread and butter. Soon the air is redolent with the savory odors of the "canoeists' stew." Having satisfied the cravings of the inner man, it is with difficulty that we summon enough energy to go about the scullion duties. Here a bit of advice. Never put off until to-morrow what can be done to-night—especially the dish washing. If you leave until morning the washing of the kettle in which the stew has been made, or the pan in which the bacon has been fried, you will find double the quantity of grease in them, and no doubt receive a left-handed blessing from the cook, who will invariably want the frying-pan just when you have got it filled with grease, sand and ashes.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHICH ENDS IN A CLOUD OF SMOKE.

THE next morning we head for the tall spire in the distance, which I know to be in Kittanning, five miles away. The hillsides are pierced with holes almost as far along as the eye can reach. We paddle close along the shore opposite one of these dark holes, when we see a railroad car standing beneath a high trestle with broad platform at its top. Leading up the face of the hill we can see a narrow railway track and make out the little cars, one going up empty while the other comes down with its load of black diamonds. Half way up the hillside, while the loaded car keeps the main track, by a simple mechanical contrivance the switch is turned by the empty one, and it turns off to the right and midway they pass one another, each on its own track. Arrived at the bottom the contents of the loaded one are dumped into a car beneath. With the arrival of the loaded car at the bottom the empty one reaches the mouth of the tunnel, where it is unhitched and run far back into the hill where the miner is at work with pick and shovel cutting down the black walls of coal, which dimly reflect the rays of his tiny covered light.

With the increasing breadth of the river we find a lessening of the current, and in consequence make slower time, but anxiety for the safety of our craft from the treacherous rocks has passed, and we paddle on with laughter and song, paying little heed to the drizzling rain which has set in. The five miles between Kittanning and our last night's stopping place have required as many strokes of the paddle as a like distance on the canals, so that the whistles and bells are summoning the workmen from their mid-day meal as the bows of our canoes grate on the sand beneath the first bridge that spans the Allegheny. We don oil skins, and the skipper of the Aurora attracts no little attention as he stalks through the main street and up to the Post Office. Purchasing a late New York paper and a peck of onions, he returns and finds Barnacle entertaining a number of gentlemen. They have been looking for us for more than a week and feared we had passed in the night. One in particular, who had imbibed more corn juice than was good for the condition of his mind, wanted a "lift as far as Pittsburgh," and almost insisted on coming on board.

High hills crowd the waters into a narrow channel again, and we experience the delights of a rapid current, until some miles below we go into camp. While Barnacle is building the fire, I go off on a foraging expedition and return with sou'wester filled with fine potatoes from a neighboring patch. Supper and the evening past, and candle burning low, I am soon in dreamland. "Well, now, if that ain't the purtiest bit

of a boat I ever see, I'm a sinner." Am I dreaming? No, it is broad daylight, and as I open the door of my little cabin I see a tall shaggy individual with a shotgun resting carelessly in his hands. "Good morning, neighbor, is that your potatoe patch just across the road there? I borrowed some potatoes from it last night, and am ready to pay for them now." I didn't know the meaning of that shotgun in his hands. "Yer welcome to all the pertates yer want," said he, and then he explained that he was out looking for strayed sheep, and as quail were abundant, had brought the gun to knock one over for breakfast. I had the water boiled and coffee made as Barnacle put in an appearance with a loaf of fresh bread and a string of sausages. The appetizing odor from the sizzling links came from the frying-pan, and our visitor did not resist the invitation to sit by and have a bite.

The morning was bright and clear, with a steady breeze down stream. A good-bye from our friend, and we were again afloat with Pittsburgh twenty-five miles away. While we were considering the expediency of raising sail, the river made a turn and the wind sweeping down a narrow valley, came out dead ahead, giving us a hard day's work. About mid-day we passed Freeport, and at three o'clock, on a low sandy island about five miles above Pittsburgh, made our camp. To-morrow we would land at the Iron City. The night is dark, with heavy clouds threatening rain before daybreak. The shores on either side of us are thickly dotted with the homes of mechanics,

and now and then the hilarity of half drunken men is borne to the ear from the low drinking saloon opposite. We smother our camp-fire at an early hour and draw the low-hanging willow branches close, that the light from the lantern within the tent may not attract the attention of inquisitive visitors. Before turning in I take a peep outside and discover that the clouds have disappeared, disclosing the clear heavens studded with bright stars, which the frost-tipped leaves and grasses reflect, while the dark waters of the river flow silently by. The fire is going and the coffee steaming before the sun gets a peep at us the following morning, and before he has a chance to thaw the heavy coating of frost from off the tent and canoes, we have made our breakfast, civilized our faces by the use of a razor, and are rapidly shortening the distance between us and the great Iron City, over which, like a pall, hangs the dense cloud of black smoke from hundreds of tall chimneys and the smoke stacks of steamers. Cautiously we approach the only available landing stage located at the abutment of the bridge which spans the river.

CHAPTER IX.

DOWN THE OHIO.

AT the Post Office we receive each a budget of letters; and then with our arms filled with stores we return to the water's edge, and just as a steamer passes under the bridge, we shoot out in her wake, and at 1:30 o'clock are caught in the whirl of meeting waters at the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, and are on the great Ohio, which is a tributary to the mighty Mississippi. The river here has a width of about half a mile, and this is its medial width along its winding course to it debouchure into the Mississippi at Cairo. The head of the river has an elevation of 1150 feet above the sea, while in its long descent to its mouth there is a gradual fall of only 400 feet; thus its current, except at the season of freshets, is more uniform than that of any other river in North America of equal length. The stage of water is now so low that only the lightest draft steamers can navigate its channels, in consequence of which the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers are blocked with hundreds of coal-laden scows awaiting a "coal rise," that they may be towed to their far

southern destinations. On our left the shores are high, and along the face of the hills can be seen the dark, dismal entrances to the mines, and the long troughs down which the coal is sent to the great scow-like boat at the water's edge. One steamer will usually take down a tow of from twenty to thirty of these "coal floats." I am told that not infrequently a whole tow will be sunk, and that a steamer will seldom reach New Orleans without losing one or more of these flats with hundreds of tons of black wealth.

It was not until we were about five miles below the city that the smoke cloud thinned out enough to allow a glimpse of the sun and breathing without inhaling more or less of the sooty deposit into our lungs. Dead Man's Island, one mile above Shoustown, Pa., offering a suitable camp site, we landed and made an early camp, as the air was disagreeably raw and cold. Again, on the following morning, a heavy fog covered all things with a wet blanket, and it was not until ten o'clock that we broke camp and paddled to the forlorn village, where we mailed the answers to the letters we received at Pittsburgh. The day was wet and generally disagreeable; and as we passed town after town, with the black smoke issuing from the chimneys, depositing its soot on land and water alike, filling eyes, nose and mouth with its grime, we did wish for a breath of the fresh air of the glorious Adirondacks and a draft of Horicon's pure waters. We had no longer to guard against running foul of sharp rocks or boulders, as the channel was now clear to the mouth; but a new cause of

anxiety presented itself—the great stern-wheel steamers, which a man has told me frequently capsize the large river skiffs with their tremendous swells; but after a day or two of experience we not only lost all fear, but came to have a certain fondness for these craft and hailed the sight of one with delight. If they were coming up stream we paddled so close to them that their guards could be touched with the paddle. It was amusing to see the passengers and crew run aft to see us “overturned” in the great swells that our little craft rode as buoyantly as though they were but corks on the water. Here comes one now, a freight towboat, heading directly for us. We can scarcely see her hull, it is so low in the water, little more than a foot of it rising above the surface, and much of that is hidden by the wave that piles up ahead of her. As we pass within three feet of the guards I can see the negro stokers shoveling the soft bituminous coal into the fire-boxes.

A break in the hills shows us the mouth of Beaver River; and notwithstanding that the rain is falling in heavy showers and now and then is driven with force against our faces by a strong blast of wind, we experience a sense of rejoicing on beholding the goodly amount of water that is flowing into the Ohio. I look at it and wonder if I will ever be satisfied with the amount of water. Like the money-making man, “the more I get the more I want.” The bread is getting low, and although it is Sunday, we land in front of Georgetown, and while Barnacle makes the

necessary purchases, I am interviewed by about half the populace and am asked all sorts of odd questions, one man wanting to know if my companion is trying to hire a hall to show in.

The river has now broadened, and the channel is so straight that we are anxious that the wind would come out fair for us, that we may relieve the monotony of paddling by some sailing.

We have left Pennsylvania, and now go into camp on Line Island, in West Virginia. I am awakened in the morning by what I supposed to be rain, but what proves to be a heavy fog dripping off the branches overhanging the canoe. As we are about to push off into the stream I hear the slow puff-puff of a steamer, and shortly after her whistle sounds the signal to keep out of the way, as she pushes her tow of barges against the current. In strong contrast to the one whistle of our Northern steamers are those of the Ohio and Mississippi craft, which seldom have less than three, and from that up to a full octave. Paddling cautiously, with the sense of hearing constantly on the alert, that we may not be run down by a steamer, we reach Steubenville, Ohio, where the fog gradually rises and enables us to have a fair view of the Pan-Handle Railroad bridge which here spans the river. With the lifting of the fog a breeze springs up from the north, and the heart beats quickly in anticipation of the delights of a sail. The loungers along the shore look with amazement marked on their countenances as they witness the quick rigging of the little ships, and one

of them waves his hat as the Aurora's white wings, filled with the welcome wind, heel her over, while the waters part with a hissing sound at her fore. Oh, what a delightful relief after the weary miles of paddling. The breeze carries us on at so fair a speed that we find our craft and their occupants the center of attraction as we sail past the busy manufacturing town of Wheeling, W. Va. The wind leaves us soon after, and we make camp, well satisfied with the run of forty-seven miles under sail and paddle. The city of Wheeling presents an interesting scene as viewed from our camp, with the heavy cloud of smoke through which shoot the flames from the many chimneys of forges and glass works which make it the busy city it is. The heavy pounding of the trip-hammer; the rap-a-tap-tap of the riveting-hammer as it heads the rivets binding together the plates of boiler iron; the piercing shrieks of steam whistles and the loud calls of the teamsters as they urge their mule teams up the steep cobble-paved levee, are all in strong contrast to the quiet of the up-river country through which we had so lately come. After having well shaken the sails and tents and washed the decks of the canoes to free them from the coating of soot that the heavy cloud of smoke had deposited upon them during the night, we again set sail, and before a favoring but fitful breeze, soon reach Moundsville, the location of one of the prehistoric mounds which are so plentiful throughout the Ohio Valley. Again the high hills have closed in on the river, which here takes a sharp turn to the

right and shuts off the wind. We furl the sails, but leave them on deck, in readiness for use on the slightest intimation of a breeze. The sun has come over the hilltops undimmed by fog or cloud, and sheds his genial warmth upon us, brightening up all nature and instilling new life and activity into the birds that sweetly warble from their perches in the branches of the high trees. The river now winds in and out among the hills, constantly changing the scene.

The night of October 24 was the coldest yet experienced on the cruise, and although I slept warm and comfortable, when I turned out to take my usual morning bath I found a heavy fog being driven before a strong up-stream wind, and that the paddles had been frozen to the ground. While we were at breakfast a native came along, and stopping to admire our craft, informed us that "we had a right smart of ice in our hog-trough last night." All day we paddled against the head wind and chilling fog with aching fingers, which received very little protection from the soaked woolen mittens. Except the sight of a steamer slowly ascending the river, we met with nothing to enliven the monotony of the sunless day, and gladly accepted an inviting camp site on Grape Island early in the afternoon.

CHAPTER X.

IN WHICH WE SING A SONG.

THE country has now become more pleasing in character, and many of the islands, as we paddle slowly by their shores, give evidences of great fertility where cultivation has been bestowed on them. Many of these islands have low stone wing dams connecting them with the main shore, constructed for the purpose of deepening the channel by diverting a considerable body of water into it. When the waters of the river are at so low a stage as now, the tops of these dams come into view, and must of course be avoided even by the canoeist; but at times of high water they become submerged to such a depth that steamboats are enabled to pass over them.

Towns are frequently passed on both sides of the river, and at sunset we make our camp on the Ohio shore below the little hamlet of Newport. At this season of the year it is seldom that we have two successive days of fine weather, and I am not surprised, during the night, to hear the rain pattering on my canvas roof. The day breaks cloudy and dismal, but within two hours the wind changes, the clouds part and the sun sheds his bright rays upon us, while

the wind springs up to a good sailing breeze. Away we go; and the high hills echo my voice as I give vent to my feelings and sing:

THE CANOEIST'S AULD LANG SYNE.

We've come from ocean, river, lake,
To nature's fairest shrine,
While far and near the echoes wake
In rocks of auld lang syne.

(*Chorus.*)

On waters bright, 'mid silvery spray,
Who cares for storied Rhine?
We'll camp at close of summer day
'Neath trees of auld lang syne.

(*Chorus.*)

This life so old our life renewes,
While man and boat combine
With sail, or blade our own canoes,
The craft of auld lang syne.

(*Chorus.*)

Although our friendship count not years,
'Tis friendship, yours and mine;
And parting hath a thought of tears,
Like love of auld lang syne.

(*Chorus.*)

Auld rocks, auld trees, auld craft, auld ties,
Auld waters, fresh or brine,
Shall ever hold in our glad eyes
The charm of auld lang syne.

(*Chorus.*)

Afloat, ashore, we'll meet again;
Now here's my hand for thine;
We'll meet again, we'll meet again
For love of auld lang syne.

(*Chorus.*)

At the wharf-boat on the levee of the thriving city of Marietta, Ohio, the next day, I was accosted by a gentleman who, with Dr. Z. D. Walter, had been awaiting our arrival; and with the kind friends met here, we visited the points of interest, taking a peep into the oldest church in the State, and the ancient Indian mound, of which the citizens of Marietta feel justly proud. This is one of the most prominent of the numerous works of the mound-builders. Its interior remains a sealed mystery, through the whim of its donor, who decreed that it should remain the property of the city so long as not disturbed.

Singularly enough, the trading flatboat, that craft peculiar to the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, was presented to my sight on the Muskingum River. The Rechabite had been floated down the Muskingum from Zanesville, Ohio, loaded with earthenware and bound on a trading trip along the shores of the Ohio. As a village is approached the trader is worked into some secure locality adjacent, where she will remain sometimes for weeks, her stock being traded for cash or barter, when she will move on to some other point. Making an afternoon start from Marietta I bade good-bye to my friends; the canoes were launched from the wharf-boat, and, accompanied by one of our new-made acquaintances in his canoe, we head out into the strong wind but delightfully rapid current. We had not reckoned on so strong a wind, and by the time we reached Neal's Island were prepared to make camp. After supper our escort sat with us at the camp-fire, then launched his canoe

and paddled to Parkersburgh, three miles below, where he boarded a steamer. During the night I heard her passing our camp, as she churned the water into dirty foam with the huge wheel propelling her toward Marietta. Either fog or rain seemed to be of everyday occurrence, and the morning following our departure from Marietta was no exception. In the thick fog we paddled with caution, for the stream was full of steam craft. Parkersburgh, at the mouth of the little Kanawha River, was scarcely visible through the fog; but we were reminded that there are other oil-producing regions than those of Pennsylvania by the amount of oil on the current of the river that flows from the oily soil of West Virginia. We caught a glimpse of Belpré, opposite Parkersburgh, on the Ohio shore, as we passed beneath the massive iron bridge over which a heavily-laden train of cars was being slowly drawn by two powerful engines. Two miles below lay Blennerhassett's Island, made famous by the exploits of the unprincipled Aaron Burr, in his attempt to carry out his bold and extravagant dream of wresting Mexico from Spain and taking the Ohio and Mississippi valleys from the United States. All this fertile region, with its varied climate, was to be blended into one empire; the great lakes were to be his boundary on the north, the Gulf of Mexico should dash with its salt waters his southern shores, the high peaks of the Rocky Mountains should guard the west, while the towering Alleghenys on the east should protect him from invading foe. This was his dream, and a fair one it was.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VAGABONDS' HIGHWAY.

THE day became uncomfortably warm as the fog cleared away, and the sun sent his rays down out of a cloudless sky; and at length a shady spot was chosen on the Ohio shore, where we ate our dinner-supper meal; and then we started on an evening paddle. Little is gained by this sort of traveling though, as one loses much of interest and subjects himself to many little annoyances, not compensated for by the distance gained. After three miles, the last one in darkness so black that we frequently found our craft aground on the low muddy shores, we swung around a bend and came on a group of lights, which proved to be those of a steamer tied to the shore for wooding up. Making camp on a strange shore in darkness is a difficult operation; but a smooth spot beneath a high bank of clay was chosen, and hauling out we spread the canvas roofs over our cabins and were soon enjoying our well-earned repose. The heavy rumbling of a wagon wakes me as the sun is glinting the water; and on turning out I see, almost over my head, a six-mule team drawing a huge wagon heavily

laden with tobacco. A passing boatman tells me that we are one mile below Murraysville, W. Va. From this point in our trip the selection of a camp site for the night becomes an important consideration. It is an easy matter to draw the craft out on a smooth, sloping beach of clay and sand, but these places are not always to be found at the proper time for ending the day's run. The shores are now oftener precipitous bluffs. Generally at the base of such a bluff there is a short beach, but the danger that tons of loose earth may fall on us forbids our making use of it, and again the heavy swash from the passing steamers is so great that we would be in constant danger of having our cabins filled with water. The high bank of the river is always on the convex side of the river, while on the concave side there is usually found a bar with low land running back from it. Hence, we choose the concave side when practicable. Another objectionable feature, and the one most to be guarded against, is the army of tramps, unprincipled boatmen, and scoundrels of all descriptions. The Ohio and Mississippi rivers are the great western highways for a large class of vagabonds who prey upon the country as they pass through it. They travel singly and in twos and threes. Stealing some valuable article from a farmhouse or barn, they appropriate the first skiff they can find, pull across and down the stream for a hundred miles, and then abandoning the stolen boat take passage on a steamer, flatboat or other craft and escape to New Orleans or some Texas town. Intercourse with these desperadoes is to be avoided

as much as possible. In selecting our camp site for the night we usually make as little show as possible.

For some days we had been warned of the dangers of the Setart's Falls to our light boats. All day we had been meeting with slight descents, where the current would be perceptibly increased, and at times the waves made by the swifter current meeting the almost motionless waters of the pools, would cause our craft to dance about with that motion which is so delightful to the canoeist's soul; but nothing more alarming than the wetting of the decks occurred. It was with much amazement that, when toward the close of one day I asked the whereabouts of Setart's Falls, I was asked, "Why, didn't you come through them?"

The 2d of November was a red-letter day for us. Breaking camp at eight o'clock, we made sail with a brisk down river breeze, which in the course of the next two hours increased to half a canoe gale, giving the Aurora's skipper, at least, all he wanted to do to keep her right side up and avoid wetting her cargo. The wind came down with a howl as we approached Pomeroy, Ohio, opposite which is a long, low sandy point jutting into the stream, forcing the water through a narrow channel scarcely wider than a steamer's breadth. And as ill luck would have it, we here met an upward bound steamer. Unfortunately the Aurora's lateen sails could not be taken from the mast nor lowered without coming up into the wind, and from the want of room I was unable to bear away. Thus I was forced to take my chances of being run down by the steamer or driven on to the bar

by the force of the wind; but I escaped both and shot by clear. Just as I cleared her I was caught in the huge rollers from her great wheel, the wind swept down and my craft went up one sea like a flash, when she suddenly pitched into the trough with such force that the long slender spar was snapped off at the masthead, and overboard went the sail. So suddenly released from the pressure, the boat rolled to windward until her coaming was for an instant submerged. It was no time then to mend the broken spar, we must make all we can of the fine breeze. The sail was rolled up and stowed below, and as the *Comfort* came down her skipper loaned her unused mizzen to the *Aurora*, and I set the borrowed sail aft, and with my own mizzen forward, I managed to keep Barnacle in sight the rest of the day. A huge camp-fire warmed all outdoors while we sat about it that night, and while I brought up the log, Barnacle fished the broken spar, that all might be in readiness for a breeze on the morrow. As the brilliant sparkle and flash of the silvery lamps above were reflected from the diamond points of the heavy frost, we turned into our snug quarters, well pleased with the run of forty-four miles under sail alone.

The whipping of the little A. C. A. burgee on its staff at the bow of my canoe awakened me at an early hour. I found a brisk down-river breeze blowing. Breakfast hurriedly eaten, canoes packed and white wings spread, we went dancing toward the briny waters of the Gulf. Well it was that we made the early start and gained the help of the wind, as we

had not made more than twelve miles when it died out to a complete calm and forced us to again take up the well-tried double paddles. At noon we landed at the mouth of Big Sandy Creek, the dividing line between West Virginia and Kentucky. On the south shore is the town of Cattellsburgh, Ky. The Sandy was pouring out a large volume of discolored water, which bore on its bosom great quantities of debris, in the shape of fence rails, boards, cut timbers and trees. Some of the latter had their great long roots with the slender tendrils trailing after them, showing that there had been a heavy storm at the headwaters and on the tributaries.

As I knocked the ashes from my pipe and threw aside "Round the World in Eighty Days," with which I had beguiled the last two hours, I perceived that the mercury was rapidly falling, warning us that the weather to-morrow would savor more of winter than any we had thus far had; and so it proved, for on turning out in the early morning the marks of Jack Frost were everywhere visible, and the canoe tent came off without a wrinkle, making it necessary to thaw it before the fire in order to stow it in its proper place. Again the wind is in our faces, and the flying spray frequently reaches far enough aft to wet the woolen mittens, which in turn impart their cold moisture to our chilled hands. The current is a strong one, and by two o'clock we have made a distance of thirty miles, when the river, making a sharp turn to the east, gives us a fair wind and we again make sail and reach the town of Portsmouth, Ohio,

where we receive our mail. Camping about three miles below the town, the appetizing odor of fried beefsteak and onions, together with that of fragrant coffee, filled the air as the sun sent long, slanting shadows across the waters.

During the night I was awakened by the deep-toned whistle of a towing steamer as she signaled her approach to Portsmouth. Thoughts of the inventive genius of the day fill my mind as I lay in my snug quarters. I see far back in the years gone by the red Indian, as he swiftly and silently descends the stream in his birchen canoe or shapely dugout; the white man, a few years later, encroaching on the domain of the child of the forest in the rudely-built batteau, scow or sailboat, is borne on its swiftly-flowing current. I see them in their vain attempts to stem the same current in their endeavors to reach the up-river country. Then comes the thought of the application of steam to the conquering of the powerful current, where wind as a motor has only been partially successful. As the Cleremont was the first steam-propelled vessel to ascend the Hudson, in 1807, so the New Orleans was the first to part the waters of the Ohio and Mississippi in 1811, making a successful trip from Pittsburgh to New Orleans, and filling with awe the minds of the children of the forest, who gazed upon the puffing, fire-eating monster and called it "penelore" (fire canoe).

Owing to the muddy condition of the shores our canoes need a thorough overhauling, and under a bright November sun we go about our houseclean-

ing. A water mark placed the night before shows that the never stationary but always rising or falling Ohio is now rising rapidly, and as our camp is but three or four inches above the river surface, we search for a site that will be well above the reach of the rising flood. A paddle of eight miles brings us to a broad beach of sand, fringed on its upper edge with a dense growth of willows, while on the opposite side of the river is the dismal-looking, tumble-down village of Quincy, Ky. Here we camp and build a rousing fire, before which I am seated, jotting down the notes of the day's run, when we are much surprised at hearing voices on the water and soon after the grating of a boat's prow on the shore. Stepping out from the glare of the fire I receive three visitors, who prove to be shanty boatmen, who have their craft moored to the opposite shore.

"Good evenin', strangers; we see yer light, and thought as yer might hev a skiff ter sell."

"No, we are simply on a pleasure trip and have two canoes only," said I, pointing to the little craft lying side by side.

"Well, now, ef that ain't the purtiest trick I ever did see. What mout sech a boat as that cost, stranger?"

"Hundred and fifty dollars."

"Great snaix. My woman's fust man had one as cost fifty dollars, and I thought as she was ab'ut the harns'mest thing I ever did see; but she couldn't come nigh that trick. Ain't yer 'fraid that a tramp 'll come 'long and knife yer some night and steal the

little boat? There's plenty of um as would be willin' ter do it if they got a chance. Say, stranger, bring yer chum along, and come over to our shanty and hev a game of seven-up. I aint' got no whisky; but I *hev* got some tearin' good cider."

I deny having any knowledge of the game of seven-up or a fondness for "tearin' cider," and excuse myself on the plea that I am tired and must turn in. Taking the hint, they depart, evidently satisfied that there is no chance to make a haul from our camp or pockets.

All the next day we are forced to remain in our camp during a heavy downpour of rain, the rising waters of the river by nightfall reaching almost to our fireplace. The shores of the river are now in no way particularly interesting, if we except the tumble-down appearance of most of the buildings, predominant among which are the decayed negro quarters of the old slave days. The inhabitants of the Kentucky shore have a particularly forlorn and wretched aspect. Singularly enough, it is impossible to obtain a piece of salt pork in this hog-raising region. Ask the natives what they live on, and the almost invariable answer is, "Corn and bacon, but mostly corn."

CHAPTER XII.

SHANTY-BOATS AND BOATMEN.

SHANTY-boats, one of the peculiarities of the river, are now met with daily, and their construction and the characters of their occupants are a source of interesting study. These craft are sometimes called "family boats," and justly so, too, as they are often the dwelling places of an entire family, who spend their lives in floating on the river. Starting from points high up on the Allegheny or Mononghela rivers with the first signs of approaching winter, arriving at Cairo they are joined by the fleet from the upper Mississippi and Missouri, and together drift to the Southern cities, or "tie-up" within the mouth of some small stream, spending the winter in trapping, fishing, and in some cases stealing, until they accumulate sufficient funds to pay for a tow by steamer to some up-river port, when they again go to "floating." These boats differ in their build and fittings as much as the house of the planter differs from the humble quarters of the negro laborer.

It often happens that a man, tiring of the restraints imposed upon him by his better half, looks about for

a more congenial spirit, and having found one whom he fondly believes will be attentive to his wants, sewing on the buttons of his shirt and cooking the stolen hog, he pictures to her active imagination all the delights of shanty-boat life, where she will have nothing to do but drift with the ceaseless current as she eats baked 'possum and dances to the music of the fiddle or mouth organ, or swabs her gums with the ever present snuff; so she ties the gaudily trimmed hat on her head, seizes her European traveling trunk, and casting into it her personal effects, hands it over to her new lord and master, who shoulders it to the floating home, while she follows with "The Fiend of the Bloody Bayou" or "The Life of Two-Fingered Bill" safely folded in her bosom. On arriving in New Orleans the shanty-boat is sold for firewood, while her captain engages a deck passage for the Red River region, and his deserted housekeeper, compelled to shift for herself, becomes known in the low haunts of the city as the "Allegheny Rose" or the "Mountain Gazelle," but never returns to her far up-river home.

In strong contrast is the shanty-boat of the honest mechanic. His scow or boat is constructed of the best white oak, thoroughly braced and fastened with galvanized iron nails and screws, while the house, 50x15x10 ft., is built of fine white pine boards. The roof is rain-proof and has in the center a skylight. At either end is a door leading to the deck, while at each side is a row of four windows with green blinds. The hull is painted a lead color, the shanty a dark

brown. I took a peep into such a neat-looking craft and was not a little surprised at what I saw. The forward door admitted me into a sort of kitchen, where were many things usually found in an ordinary country kitchen, with a brightly polished cook-stove and pots and pans. Opening from this was a general living room, the floor neatly covered with bright colored Canton matting. The windows were surrounded prettily with cheese cloth curtains, and on the walls hung small tasty chromos and woodcuts. In one corner stood a substantial table, on which was a family Bible and other books; ranged along the side was a comfortable lounge, and beneath one of the windows was a sewing machine. Several ordinary chairs and a Boston rocker were carefully arranged. Beyond was the comfortably furnished bedroom from which a door opened to the after deck. The good wife cares for this floating home while moored to the levee in front of the town where her husband works at his trade of carpenter. Work becoming scarce in one locality, he floats his home down stream to some more likely spot; or, engaging a tow, is taken up river, and so goes from town to town, and being a good mechanic, finds work when it is to be had. His expenses are light; he has no rent nor taxes to pay, and his fuel can be found in abundance along the shore.

CHAPTER XIII.

A SHORT ONE, IN WHICH BARNACLE TAKES THE CAKE.

WE frequently pass people along the bank who call out to one another, "There goes two Injuns in canoes." Once, when approaching a group of men, women and children, I gave a whoop that made the air ring, while it had a decidedly terrifying effect on the juvenile members, who took to their heels in hot haste.

After a day's run of thirty-four miles under sail, we made camp within twenty-five miles of Cincinnati. On turning in we decided on making an early start, that we may reach the Queen City before the close of day. Reaching Maysville, Ky., I send Barnacle ashore to procure some fresh bread. His tall, gaunt form, around which his blue flannel shirt and trousers hang as on a pole; his sharp-cut features and dark complexion; the mat of still darker hair, surmounted by a broad-rimmed slouch hat, attracts the attention of the loungers and wharf rats, some of whom follow him up the levee to see what his errand ashore may be. He is absent so long that I begin

to fear he may have got into trouble, when I see him coming down the levee with long, rapid strides. Bounding into his canoe, he says: "Let's get out of this as quickly as possible." Landing on some smooth rocks about a mile below the town, we build our little fire, and while the water is heating Barnacle explains to me his anxiety to make a hasty departure from Maysville.

"You see this is election day, and every mother's son composing the crowd in that town is drunk, or nearly so. I went into the bakery, and there found four fellows, all more or less drunk. One in particular had more on board than his companions, and when I asked the baker for two loaves of bread, this Kentucky juice-guzzler told him he wanted all the bread there was in the shop. 'There are but two loaves left, sir,' said the mixer of flour and water, and this gentleman has bought them.' 'He shan't have them,' replied Mr. Kentuck, and reached out to take them from me. I tell you there was a lively scrimmage there for a minute or two."

I don't know what Barnacle did, he is non-committal on such matters; but I am satisfied that he cleaned the quartet out—he is capable of such a performance. "To the victor belong the spoils," and we have the bread.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN WHICH IS SHOWN THE WISDOM OF SITTING STILL.

A HEAD wind sprang up and gave us a hard afternoon's work, precluding the possibility of reaching Cincinnati before night, and we went into camp within seven miles of the city. Some time during the night, as I lay awake listening to the ripple of the waters along the shore, I heard a rich, clear baritone voice singing, "Way down on the Suawnee River," and looking out from my cabin window, I saw a raft slowly drifting past, on which was seated the musical being.

About mid-day on the morrow we came in sight of the great pork-packing city of the West, and ere the whistles had screeched out their announcement of the commencement of the second half of the busy day we passed under the first bridge that connects the city of Cincinnati with Covington, Kentucky. Here a busy scene meets our view. Both the Ohio and Kentucky shores of the river are a mass of steamers of all classes, both side wheel and "kick-ups," freight barges and coal scows, together with small river craft of every description. Ferry-boats

are crossing from shore to shore, dodging the ever-present shanty-boat that always seems to be in the wrong place. We meet the skippers of the craft belonging to the Cincinnati Canoe Club, and by them are introduced to the sights of the city. We spend a couple of delightful days at their club house on the miniature Lake Ross, sailing their canoes and enjoying their hospitality, for which they are so famous. November 16 sees us again afloat, and as we swiftly pass beneath the magnificent suspension bridge connecting Cincinnati with Covington, Ky., we wave our hands in adieu to the friends and city that have afforded us so much pleasure.

The river now runs through a narrow gorge. Steep hills, attaining a height of three hundred feet, sparsely wooded and seamed with deep ravines, wall it in on both sides. The trees have been denuded of their leaves through the effect of the frosts and winds of the past two or three weeks, and their bare branches are outlined against the bright sky, which is now bathed in a crimson light by the setting sun. As we had tumbled a large quantity of provisions into our canoes without properly stowing, we made an early camp on the wooded Kentucky shore, about ten miles below the city.

Early in the morning, as our breakfast fire was brightly blazing, we received a call from the owner of the farm on whose water front we had made our camp. After some pleasant conversation, he said that if we would wait half an hour he would bring us some genuine Kentucky leaf tobacco. Ah, ha!

here was a chance to smoke a pipe of unadulterated tobacco. Of course we will wait. On his return he handed me a large bunch of leaf tobacco, saying: "I don't know whether you will like this leaf; it ain't now'er's near as stout as we ginerally smoke; it is some I cured for my own use." So eager was I to smoke genuine unadulterated tobacco that I soon had my pipe filled; and as I sat by the fire and puffed away like a locomotive, I thought I had never smoked finer tobacco in all the long years that I had been a smoker. By and by, though, my head began to feel queer, and I made spasmodic clutches at the sides of the mess chest on which I was seated, for fear that I would fall over into the fire, which seemed to rise and fall as though some subterranean agency was at work heaving it up and down. I cast my eyes to the hilltops, and they were going round and round, while the river seemed to have changed its flow, and was now running up instead of down. I dared not offer to rise, as I feared that action would betray my condition to Barnacle and our visitor, and so I remained on my seat until the sensation had passed.

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHICH WE HAVE A SWELL TIME.

AS WE brought Aurora, Indiana, into view, a fine breeze sprang up directly aft. Immediately the word was passed to make sail. Paddling close under the shore to avoid the current the Aurora spreads her wings, and filling away, bounds along with delight to her skipper. But what is the matter with the *Comfort*? There she lies close in shore; her skipper standing in her cockpit with arms akimbo, while he seems lost in a brown study. I jibe and run up to him. "What's the matter, Barnacle?" "Well, if you must know, I've come away from Cincinnati without my mast." As we have had no use for the sails since leaving the Queen City, Barnacle's carelessness has remained undiscovered until now. Of course, he can't sail without a mast, and we paddle into the town of Aurora, where a new mast is made and within three hours we set sail and are off again, but with the wind very light. Our day's run has been a short one; when we build our camp on a beautiful smooth gravel beach beneath high, overhanging, tree-crowned banks on the convex side of a very abrupt bend in the river.

Barnacle wishes to make some alterations in his canoe, so we pitch the large tent and decide to remain in camp the following day. The *Comfort* is unloaded of all her duffle, which is piled in a heap about ten feet from the tent, which fronts the water. Between the tent and dunnage we build our fire, and spread about it are our mess chests and their accompanying cooking utensils. The *Aurora* lies near the water, her hatches securely covered with the hatch-cloth, while the *Comfort* has been carried to a convenient spot for working back of the tent. Comfortably wrapped in our blankets, we lie on the soft bed of leaves watching the cheerful blaze of the fire before us. "Chu-chu, chu-chu," I heard her say, as a huge steamer came down with the flood, belching forth volumes of steam from her great wide-mouthed pipes, and quicker than I can write it she was abreast of the camp, drawing the water down so low that it seemed as though she had sucked it all into her huge hull. Then came the reaction, and with one mighty rush the huge billows came sweeping along shore, picking the *Aurora* up in its strong embrace and flinging her against the tent, while it put out the fire and washed away and mixed together the pile of dunnage, mess chests and cooking utensils. Springing from my bed with the onward rush of water, I succeeded in saving my blankets from a wetting. With the fire out and wood wet, we are left in darkness, which seems all the more intense, with the thought that most of Barnacle's dunnage has been swept away, together with much of our stock of canned goods. A protracted search

rewards us with the recovery of nearly all the articles, and with daylight we succeed in finding the balance. Again turning into our blankets, I resolve never to make camp again within the reach of a steamer's swell if I can help myself.

The weather is daily growing cooler, admonishing us that we must make good use of all the time we have, that we may not be overtaken by the fields of ice that are liable at any day to come down upon us from the upper waters. Such a condition of affairs would be very discouraging, as it would necessitate a camp until the run of ice had passed, for our frail canoes would soon succumb to its grinding influences if we should undertake to force a passage through it.

As we round a sharp bend a mile or two above Patriot, Indiana, the wind, which has been almost in our faces, comes out dead aft. Quickly making sail we shoot up to the wharf-boat and intrust some letters to the pleasant man in charge, and then on at a lively speed. The air is decidedly cold, and as we sail along I add a heavy overshirt to the two that I already have on, while I wrap my feet in a thick rug and pull my soft hat snugly down about my ears, and cover my hands with a pair of stout gloves. At times the wind comes down the gullies in the high hills in such force as to tax my utmost skill in keeping the Aurora's keel down without reefing the mainsail or furling the mizzen. About the middle of the afternoon we came upon a flatboat photographer's establishment moored to the Kentucky shore, and I fancy the itinerant was doing a good business from

the number of heads poked into view as we quickly passed his floating gallery. A short distance beyond we met a small steamer coming up stream. Heading directly for her, we pass within thirty feet. From one of her port windows could be seen the broad, full-moon face of her darky steward, his mouth wide open and his rows of ivories shining while he laughed in surprise and called out, "Yah-yah, jist see dem little boats go; deys gwine ter git dare, sartin sho."

By four o'clock the wind had died out and we ran ashore, made some coffee and eat a hearty lunch and then paddled on, passing Madison, Ind., as the Cincinnati packet was swinging out of her berth into the stream. Four miles below we landed, and building a rousing camp-fire, rolled in our blankets and lay with feet to the fire, first having noted the day's run of forty-seven miles. The crisp, frost-laden air of the next morning caused us to be very active in our preparations for the hearty breakfast which we eat as a fortification against the heavy twenty-mile to windward paddle that followed, ending on Eighteen-Mile Island, so called from its distance above Louisville, Ky. Our heavy, restful sleep was not broken until long after the sun was glinting upon us through the trees.

CHAPTER XVI.

WE RUN THE FALLS OF THE OHIO.

THE afternoon of November 22 saw us paddling against a strong head wind as we approached Louisville, where are located the Falls of the Ohio River, that great barrier to uninterrupted navigation on this long water course. Before leaving Cincinnati, my friend, Judge Longworth, of the Supreme Court of Ohio, took me by the hand and said: "There is one thing I want you to promise—don't attempt to run the Falls at Louisville. I have stood on the bridge and wished that I might be able to go down them in a canoe, but it is too dangerous." I promised not to undertake it, unless I thought there was a fair prospect of getting out alive, and now the time had arrived to solve the problem. Paddling up to the float of a pretentious-looking boat house, we were welcomed to the quarters of the Louisville Rowing Club. Leaving Barnacle with the canoes, I made a short call in the city, my mind all the time filled with thoughts of how I was to get reliable information about the Falls. By the advice of a friend of Mr. Lucien Wilson, of Cincinnati, I called at the Life

Saving Station. So great are the dangers to life and property of the Falls at this point, that the Government has established and maintains one of the life saving stations here, and has placed in command the brave, warm-hearted William M. Devau. The story of these men, Capt. Devau and his two comrades, John Tully and John Gilhooly, is well known. "They were," says a recent issue of the *Louisville Commercial*, "all plain simple men, living on the river front, whom long years of experience had made expert oarsmen. They knew every current and rock on the Falls, and whenever they saw a boat going over, they would put out and save the occupants. They rescued all kinds of people—tradesmen, boys and women; and they took them from above the dam, over the Falls below the bridge, and on the dam. All this was done without the least hope of reward. Their deeds became noised abroad, and the State presented them with magnificent medals. Their fame reached Washington, and after they had saved fifty-eight lives, a station was located at Louisville Nov. 3, 1881. William Devau was made Captain, and among the crew were his gallant associates, Tully and Gilhooly. Since the station has been started the crew has saved one hundred and seventy-five people, of all ages and both sexes."

Calling on this man, in his neat station, I told him of my wish to run the Falls, and asked him if he thought there was a chance of getting through right side up. Said he: "The waters of the river are now at a very low stage, consequently the dangers of the

Falls are much greater than at any other stage. Come up into the lookout and I can show you the least dangerous course." There, in the distance, I could see the angry, boiling water, as it churned itself into foam about and over the huge rocks in its course. "Now the principal danger is in getting into the reaction and being drawn back under the Falls. If that should happen, nothing but certain death awaits you." I decided to go. After looking our craft over and being assured that we both have had some experience in running fast water, he said: "I believe it would be consistent with my duty to take the lifeboat and crew and pilot you through."

In fifteen minutes the lifeboat, with its crew of four brawny men, was launched from the house and led the way, closely followed by the Aurora, with the Comfort bringing up the rear. In single file, we went over to the Indiana shore, and there, turning slowly off to the left, we rapidly got into the powerful current and were shot past the end of the huge stone dam, whereon had assembled a crowd of spectators, who lustily cheered us and shouted words of encouragement as we went flying down the boiling, seething cataract, now buried beneath and anon tossed on the summit of the foam-crested waves. There is no time to look about, scarcely time for thought, even, as we bound along, the lifeboat ahead, the Aurora closely following, while the Comfort is some distance astern. In this order we reach the foot of the angry, roaring flood, where our kind

friends are to part from us and return to the station by the canal through which the steamers and other vessels pass around the Falls. As the boat's crew peak their oars, the Aurora rounds up to them, and I grasp each one by the hand in grateful acknowledgement of their kindness.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOSPITALITY ASHORE AND AFLOAT.

THE meeting with negroes along the shore is now of almost daily occurrence. We find them fishing for the finny inhabitants of the water or for the drift-wood floating on its surface. Every day we are assailed by some such question as: "Say, boss, why yer doan turn round and row yer boat?" "What'l yer gimme ter tow dat little skiff?" "Whar yer spec' yer gwine, anyhow?" These questions are never asked in an impudent tone, but rather that of humor, and would generally be followed by a hearty yah, yah, as though something exceedingly witty had been said.

The mornings are now cold, with the evenings little better. A disagreeable result of the cold and continual wettings that the hands are subjected to has caused them to be chapped at almost all the joints, and they are consequently very sore, requiring frequent applications of soothing compounds.

During the afternoon we passed the mouth of Salt River and the thriving town of West Point. Our camp, a few miles below Rock Haven, Ky., was so

exposed to the penetrating northeast wind that swept down the low shore, that it proved to be the most uncomfortable locality we could well have selected. A huge flock of ducks settled on the bar a few hundred yards above us, and went to feeding while we were getting our breakfast. Water that had been left in cups over night to settle had frozen solid, and all day ice would form on the decks where the strong wind would deposit spray from the little seas. At noon we landed in a bend of the river and built our dinner fire beneath a huge mass of limestone rock which had attained a height of one hundred feet, and as the sun came out from under the heavy clouds that had all the morning obscured it, the hold of immense icicles gave way, and they fell crashing at our feet. By the time we had finished our dinner the wind had subsided and the surface of the river had become perfectly calm. Owing to the cold of the last night Barnacle had had very little sleep, consequently he was drowsy to-day; I was, therefore, not much surprised, on looking back during the afternoon, to find him with head and body bent forward, while his paddle rested with one blade in the water, and he was sound asleep. With a jump he awakened at my hail; he overtook me, and we made camp on the high stony shore, while the leaden sky threatened rain before morning. All about us there was a mass of driftwood; in fact, we were forced to clear some of it away in order to make room for the canoes and tent. In the center of the swiftly-flowing stream opposite us lie the wrecks of several coal flats, and

an iron ore boat which had a few months ago struck on a rock and come to grief.

After a night of incessant rain, accompanied by a cold northeast wind, we turn out at eight o'clock and built an immense fire of logs, some of them so heavy that it required our united strength to lift even one end. Seeing a footprint in the sand along the shore (as did Robinson Crusoe on his island) I set out, clad in my picturesque suit of oil skins. Striking a path a short distance off, I followed it about three-quarters of a mile, most of the way through fields of uncut corn stalks, frequently routing from their slumbers many gaunt hogs, which here seemed to roam at will. The barking of a dog admonished me to be on my guard as to how I approached the low building of logs that now came in sight, for fear I might experience a repetition of my encounter with the vicious brute on the Allegheny.

"Good morning, ma'm," I said, as I entered the low-ceilinged room of this dismal abode of the Kentucky corn cracker. "My companion and I are encamped on the shore below here, and having run out of salt, I came up to buy a little," at the same time seating myself on the splint-bottomed chair she had placed for me before the broad open fire-place, in which some short logs were blazing brightly. She informed me that her man had died in the summer, and left her with six children, five of whom were either sitting or standing about the room. The eldest, a boy, took care of the Government lights in the neighborhood, three in number, and the neighbors had helped her

shuck her corn, but she did not know what she would be able to do after the corn and hogs had been eaten, as the farm was only rented and not owned by her husband. I sat and smoked with her (most Cracker women smoke) for an hour, while she plied me with questions of the manners and customs of what she considered my "far distant Northern home." She seemed particularly interested in the manner in which ladies of the North wore their hair, as I described it to her. Before leaving, the little dog, whose barking had alarmed me as I approached the cabin, became my fast friend, and accompanied me to camp and almost insisted on coming on board the Aurora as she spread her wings the next morning, and swiftly cut the waters before a favorable breeze. Stopping at Cloverport in the middle of the forenoon I was agreeably surprised to find a knot of people assembled on the levee, who told us that they had been watching for us for several days, having heard of our coming through the local papers. They were particularly taken with our double-bladed paddles, never having seen such a "trick" but once before, and then in the hands of Paul Boyton, when he made his trip down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers in his rubber floating suit.

Having laid in some stores we again hoisted sail, and, although the wind was cold, the sun shed his rays upon us until we were abreast of Hawesville, Ky., when the clouds drove up from the northwest and the wind sent little splashy seas over us as we changed our course to avoid the many steamers that

were running in all directions. The cold now became so severe that we were obliged to take off the sails and use the paddle in order to keep warm. Not caring to camp near the town we kept on until after night had shut down without finding a landing where we could be out of the way of the wash of the steamers.

A dim light close to the water's edge decided us to hail it, and we were received on board a shanty-boat of the poorest description. The wind howled dismally across the river and forced its way through the cracks in the siding of the shanty, causing the flame of the one dilapidated oil lamp to flare sickly. The water in the hold of the scow could be seen through the cracks in the floor as it washed from side to side with the motion of the boat. A stove, a table, and one stool comprised the furniture. Here lived two men, two little boys and one little girl of fourteen years, although she looked to be much older. "Ha, stranger, hit is well you seed our light, for there ain't a spot for several miles where you could have found a place to land and be safe from the wash of the steamboats. This is a poor place to ask a gentleman to stop, but hit is the best we have, and you are welcome to stay as long as you like."

"My woman," our host told us, "died two years ago with the ager, and left me the three little childer to care for, and a hard time I have had of hit. Benny has got the ager quite bad now, and Nora has fits every day. My pardner here is my brother, and between us we manage to take care of the little ones

We get odd jobs along the river, and have to leave the little pretties alone all day to shift for theirselves. We be shucking corn now, and the job'll last two weeks yet, and then we will let loose and go furder down to Evansville." Much more this rough, hard-featured man told me, while Barnacle was preparing our supper on the cracked and smoking stove. Barnacle has a big heart, so he cooks enough bacon and cornmeal for all hands, and borrowing a big coffee-pot, makes it full of such coffee as the poor shanty-men seldom or never taste. The children were clamorous for more coffee, and its cheering effects were visible on them as they crawled into the corn-husk-filled bunks, and were covered with the rags of blankets. Having smoked our pipes, Barnacle and I spread our waterproofs on the dirty floor, and then rolled into our blankets and soon fell into a sound sleep, the reward of a hard day's work. Several times during the night I was awakened by rats running about the floor, and once, at least, over my body.

The creaking and rocking of the shackly old scow awoke me at five o'clock, as she received the swell of the New Orleans packet puffing and snoring by. Our host and his brother left at once to get their breakfast at the farmhouse where they were working, while Barnacle and I prepared enough for the children as well as ourselves. Outside the air was bright and clear, the white frost thickly coating the decks of the canoes and all surroundings, while a thick edging of ice marked the waterline along the

shore. While the wondering children stood about the canoes as the daylight strengthened, I noticed that the shivering, barefooted little girl had but one thin garment, while the eldest boy had a rag of a coat tied about his otherwise unprotected person. Overhauling the contents of my clothes-bag, I found a warm woolen shirt, which I soon after saw covering the shoulders of the little boy, while Barnacle provided something for the shivering sister. Six o'clock saw us swinging the paddles, and now and then laying them down to beat our hands to restore circulation and warm benumbed fingers. The wind came out dead ahead after we had been afloat about two hours, and the sky was overspread with wavy clouds. The cold now became so severe that on reaching Grand View, Ohio, we were glad of the opportunity to paddle under the lee of a large produce flatboat, where we remained some time thawing out in the sun, which occasionally broke through the clouds. Bundling up as well as possible, we dip the paddles and again head into the snow-flecked wind.

For some days past offers of hospitality from residents along the river banks have been numerous, but so great is our anxiety to reach the balmy atmosphere of the Southern States and escape an encounter with the ice, that we have invariably declined the invitations to stop and have a look at the town, etc. All day the wind came up the river in a steady blow, sending spray over not only the decks of our canoes, but over our persons; and so low was the temperature that when the sun occasionally broke

through the barriers of clouds, its rays were reflected from the smooth coating of ice which had formed on the floating, bobbing canoes and captains. On approaching Owensboro, Ky., the strong current kept setting us in toward the town, but as we had no call to stop there, we kept the middle of the stream as nearly as possible. As we came abreast of the town, we could not help but notice the groups of people on the levee who seemed to manifest considerable interest in something. It soon became clear to me that the strange-looking craft in mid-stream were the subject of their interest, but this idea was dispelled when I saw a large steam scow ferry-boat swing out from the wharf-boat and slowly wheel herself along in our direction. As we were in her course, we ceased paddling in order that she might pass to windward of us, but she seemed bent on running us down and crushing our frail craft beneath her ponderous wheel. A moment more and she had come so near that we could plainly hear the question addressed to us: "Ain't you going to stop at our town? Paul Boyton did, and we cared for him handsomely," said a gentlemanly-looking man who stood nearest to us. I told him that we were anxious to get on as fast as possible, and asked to be excused, promising to stop the next time I came down the river. "Well, if you won't come ashore, come alongside and get a drink of good Owensboro Bourbon." Ah, it needed not a second invitation to bring us "alongside" of the craft, where not one, but three men, produced each a bottle of whisky, two of which were handed down

to us, after no little difficulty, owing to the bobbing movements of the canoes, which seemed anxious to be off. I am not an advocate of the use of ardent spirits, but that long draft from the "black bottle" sent the blood tingling through my veins, and warmed me to the ends of my fingers and toes. As I was about to hand the bottle back I was told to "keep it and drink to the health of the citizens of Owensboro, as we sat about the camp-fire." The holder of bottle No. 3, not to be outdone by his companions, tossed his bottle toward me, but owing to my hands being clumsy with the heavy mittens, I missed it, and overboard it went, but Barnacle, quick as a flash, had it by the neck and took good care to hold on to it. With a screech from her whistle and groans from the steam pipes, the forlorn-looking craft wheeled herself off to the opposite shore, while her passengers gave us a hearty cheer and "bon voyage."

CHAPTER XVIII.

VOYAGING ON A FLATBOAT.

FIVE miles below the treating scene we came to a small island, heavily wooded to the water's edge, and here we made our camp, the great depth of fallen leaves making a bed so soft that it was long after daylight before we awoke and gazed with astonishment on the country covered with snow. Here was a new experience, and I seriously thought of bringing out the little fluid stove that had all this long cruise been stowed away in the after part of my canoe. But Barnacle suggested, as some of the dunnage and the tent will need to be dried before being packed, that we build a fire outside. Gathering some slender twigs and binding them into a bundle about the end of a stout stick, we have a substantial broom, with which we soon sweep away the snow, leaving us a dry and clear spot on which to pursue our culinary operations and packing. As we push off, a flock of hundreds of ducks rose from an opposite bar and went quacking and whistling down stream ahead of us.

By ten o'clock the wind came out dead ahead, and

although the temperature was not as low as that of the day before, we suffered from the cold, and the chaps on hands and lips caused much discomfort. By noon the wind had increased almost to a gale, and we were blinded by the flying snow. The sight of a couple of flatboats moored to the Indiana shore was greeted with no small degree of satisfaction.

"Captain, have you got a fire on board?" was my hail to a man's head that I saw protruding from the stern window of one of these flats.

"Yes, and a good one it is, too. Come in."

Hauling the canoes out on the gravelly shore, we were received on board and conducted to the "galley," where the odors arising from a "boiled dinner," which was in process of cooking, strengthened our already ravenous appetites.

"Take off yer coats, sit up by the stove and warm yer; dinner will soon be ready, and yer can hev a hot meal afore yer leave."

While in conversation with this hospitable man, I learned that he was the same who had so kindly entertained Mr. N. H. Bishop at a Christmas dinner, while he was on his famous voyage down this river a few years ago. (See "Four Months in a Sneakbox," by N. H. Bishop.) The wind had dropped a little by the time we had finished the bountiful and hot dinner set before us, but the temperature seems no milder. We paddled off from the flat as several loads of potatoes were hauled down to the shore to be taken on board.

As we were passing Newburgh, Ind., we overtook

a flatboat in mid-stream, and were invited to "come on board." It is needless to say the invitation was heartily accepted. Tying the canoes alongside, we were soon sitting by the cheerful fire burning in the large stove forward. "All hands go to supper. Come, strangers, turn to and help eat," was the kindly invitation of the hearty skipper of the potato-laden flatboat *Trotter*. As the river is so low, the pilot decided not to risk running aground in the darkness, and a few moments after supper ordered the boat tied up. Two of the crew, springing into one of the skiffs that lay alongside and taking with them the end of a two-inch rope, rowed rapidly ashore, and whipping the hawser around a tree, "snubbed" the craft until she came to a standstill, when another line was put out, also to a tree. Stout poles were then put out, one end resting against the bank, while the other was placed against the snubbing posts of the boat as a safeguard against her being washed ashore by the swell from passing steamers. The pilot of a produce flatboat has supreme command of the craft from the time she starts on her voyage until it is finished. It is he who says when she shall start and when come to anchor. The crew of this boat consists of ten men, all on duty when the boat is under way, but at other times one man only is on the watch, and when he has stood his trick of two hours he is relieved by the next, and so on in rotation until all have done duty in order. A large space in the forward end is given up to the crew. Here they have their bedding and blankets

spread over planks laid on the potato-filled barrels, while the valises containing their clothing are hung on nails driven into the siding near the roof or deck. A large box stove is placed in the center of the space, and a lantern is hung on one of the posts supporting the roof. A very pleasant evening was spent here among the jolly flatboatmen, listening to their yarns of life on the river and the many dangers to which they have been subjected. Of course some of these tales were taken *cum grano salis*. A member of this crew, a light-hearted, jovial fellow, told me that he was the son of a professor in a Western college, but preferred the roving life to one among "musty books and under home restraints." I have since learned that his story was substantially correct. As the nine o'clock watch was set I rolled into my blankets on a couch constructed of a board laid between two rows of barrels, and slept the sleep of the weary.

The announcement of breakfast caused me to spring up with such alacrity that I bumped my head against one of the roof timbers with such force as to cause a walnut-sized bunch to remain there for several days thereafter. As soon as breakfast was over, the pilot gave orders to cast off, and with the loosening of the lines the boat swung off into the current. A second order, "Oars," was now given, and the entire crew, together with the two strangers, sprang to the thirty feet oars or sweeps, six in number, four on the sides and one at either end. When dipping the huge blades in the water they walk along to the end of the

stroke, thus rowing the craft out into the strength of the current. "That'll do," relieves the crew from further duty until "Oars" is called again, when the same operation is gone through. Now and then "Gouger" will be the order from the pilot, when the oar at the bow is swung athwartships, to right or left, as the motion of his hand indicates. The oar at the stern is call'd the "steering" oar, and that at the bow the "gouger," but why the latter should be so called I am at a loss to understand; in its workings it is as much a steering oar as that at the stern.

We are now on the most shallow reach of the Ohio River, extending from Troy to Evansville, Ind. The sun took a peep at us through the clouds a few moments after seven o'clock, but retired in disgust as the wind came up the river with the same gusts and snow squalls that had characterized it the day before. So strong is the wind, the flat cannot make headway, and she is again tied up to the bank. With an all-round shake of the hand, we start on our Thanksgiving Day paddle, very anxious to reach Evansville, where I am to receive news from the friends who are watching with much anxiety my daily progress. By twelve o'clock canoes and captains have again become cased in ice, and the stomach is growling for more fuel. Finding a sheltered spot, beneath the high bank, we land where there is an abundance of drift wood, and soon have a roaring fire going which warms us and dries our clothing.

Since leaving Lake George I have had stowed away in my canoe a can of roast turkey; this I have

zealously guarded in order that the national feast-day might not pass without our having a dinner of the national bird. It is for warming this and baking a hoe cake that Barnacle builds the little cook fire a short distance from the roarer, by which we have been warmed and dried. As we sit on the pile of driftwood before the fire on this sunless day, the snow flakes circle about us as we eat out Thanksgiving Day dinner, the while our thoughts fly to the friends and relatives in the distant homes, gathering round the bountifully spread tables, thinking of the canoe cruisers on the far distant Ohio.

After landing at the float of the St. Johns Rowing Club, at Evansville, Ind., while Barnacle remains in charge of the canoes, I make a hurried trip to the post office, where I meet with a disappointment at finding that, as this is a legal holiday, the post office is closed. By dint of much inquiry I finally prevailed on the delivery clerk to look over his bundle of letters, but there are none for me. I cannot understand this, but afterward learned that my letters had been returned to the writers on the morning of the very day on which I had called for them. I returned to the water's edge with disappointment so plainly marked on my countenance that Barnacle at once calls out, "Needn't say so, I know you have no letters." "Well, if I haven't any letters I have some choice tobacco and a loaf of fine bread," said I. A thicket of willows, four miles below the city, offering us a shelter from the bleak winds, we concluded to go no further. All night I tossed about in my narrow quar-

ters suffering intense pain, no doubt the result of eating the canned turkey, which doubtless had been so long in the can as to be unfit for use. When the time for launching arrived I felt more like going to a house and to bed than paddling against the strong wind that was blowing.

On reaching Henderson, Ky., a distance of eight miles from our last night's camp, I went on shore for the purpose of mailing letters in answer to those that I didn't get at Evansville. On my return to the wharf-boat I was accosted by a gentleman, who said, "Well, you have come a long distance, ain't you hungry?" He then introduced himself as Capt. Nate Smith, of the steamer Iron Cliff, which was lying at the levee. "Dinner is just about ready; bring your companion and come on board." As it is my rule never to refuse an invitation to dine, we were soon seated at the table in the comfortable saloon. A chat and cigar after dinner, and we put off, this time with the wind and temperature slightly moderated. From Henderson the river takes a sharp bend off to the right and almost doubles back upon itself within a distance of about eighteen miles, and thus it was that, although the wind continued from the same quarter as in the morning, we could use our sails for a few miles in the afternoon. As the sun was nearing the western horizon, we spied a flatboat tied up to the shore, and, of course, received an invitation to "come aboard." It was gladly accepted, and after supper I went down into my canoe, which was moored alongside the flat, and passed up my blankets, pipe and

tobacco. Said the pleasant captain, "The whole boat is at your disposal to sleep in, but we have but one blanket apiece." As we sat about the cabin fire smoking, singing and spinning yarns, a New Orleans packet came down, and as her ugly swell came in it caught the Aurora and flung her under the fantail of the flat—a sort of after deck—where I could both hear and feel her as she pounded against the guards. Anxiously I awaited the coming of the dawn, that I might examine into the damages that she had sustained, but much to my joy she was not injured beyond a few slight cuts in her deck, and some superficial chafing along her gunwale.

At seven o'clock the wind was still blowing up stream and the flat was forced to remain at her moorings, for although the wind was light, she, being without a load, would have drifted up stream, instead of with the current. Bidding adieu to the jolly crew with whom we had spent a pleasant night, we cast off and headed into the wind. Scarcely had we left the boat when the wind began to rise, blowing off the Kentucky shore and causing us some hard work to avoid being driven on to the opposite shore. We were just about to give up and take what shelter there might be for us wherever we drifted, when an island came into view not more than a mile distant. To this we determined to paddle, if possible, and there find shelter. It was as hard a piece of paddling as I had ever undertaken, but the fine sand beach on which we landed was sufficient reward for the hard work to reach it. Although the day was

not half spent, we made ourselves as comfortable as possible in anticipation of being forced to remain here over night; and well it was that we did so, for the wind continued to blow with increasing fury until the sun went down, and then the mercury took a drop that was decidedly chilling to our sensibilities. More than a hundred cords of driftwood were all about us, and with this we built and kept up all night a glorious fire that warmed the whole island. Before turning in, I stepped out from the influences of the fire, and saw that this was to be the coldest night of the season. With my head propped up on a log and my blankets drawn snugly about me, I lay for a couple of hours, reading, the bright flames of the fire affording me sufficient light. But tired nature triumphed at last, and I fell off into an untroubled sleep. Force of habit is strongly illustrated in Barnacle; he wakes up regularly at the time of turning out of the different watches on shipboard, and seizes on these moments to replenish the fire. In this way I account for the fact that at daylight the fire is still brightly burning over a large body of glowing coals.

CHAPTER XIX.

NIPPED IN THE ICE.

AS THE sun gilded the treetops on our island it revealed to us the deep blue sea of sky unmarked by even a single cloud, promising us a day of comfort. Our camp had been made some distance from and above the water, so that it was not until we were about our preparations for breakfast that I went down to the canoes for some article. Here my eyes rested on a scene that caused me to stand transfixed with amazement, and, for a moment, to doubt my sanity.

From our island to the Kentucky shore, and as far up and down the stream as the eye could reach, was one unbroken sheet of ice. That which we had been working so long and hard to avoid had finally overtaken us, and we were at last frozen in.

I am greatly concerned at this state of affairs, but Barnacle takes it very coolly, and goes about his culinary operations as though it were an everyday occurrence to be frozen in on an uninhabited island with but two days' provisions on hand.

Having eaten our breakfast, Barnacle fills and lights his pipe, and throwing himself back against the log in front of which he had been sitting, says, in the coolest possible manner: "Well, what are we going to do?" I suggest that we load the canoes, and then launching them on the ice, while one walks along the island shore and tows, the other, with a long pole, could keep the canoe off, and in this way we could reach the end of the island, where we could see there was open water. But on testing the strength of the ice we found that this would not do, as it was not sufficiently strong to bear the weight of the loaded canoes. Another suggestion is, that we take the duffle to the open water, and then tow the canoes, which being light would not break through the ice. But Barnacle suggests the most feasible plan, and that is, to load the canoes, and breaking the ice near the shore, with heavy poles clear away enough space in which to launch them, and then, inch by inch, foot by foot, break a channel ahead until we reach the outer edge of the field. Although there is little current, there is enough to carry away the cakes of ice that we break out and force beneath the field, leaving us the clear space in which to launch.

Barnacle is the first to get to work after the launch, and soon has a space the length of his canoe broken; he then backs out, and the Aurora heads into the canal, driven with all the force that I am capable of, in the hope that she will mount the ice and slide on its smooth surface a few inches at least,

and thus give me a longer reach with my pole. But she simply cuts into the edge of the ice and there sticks. I now beat the ice to pieces for a distance of eight or ten feet and then back out, and the *Comfort* makes a dash at it and succeeds in cutting about as far as the *Aurora* had done. The *Comfort*'s last dash shows that the ice is thinner near the center of the stream, and as the pieces have been carried beneath the surface, our canal is clear. Getting a good start and under strong headway, I go crashing into the icy field and cut a passage through to open water, and with a shout of triumph turn to witness the passage of the *Comfort*, which is following me slowly, her few inches of extra beam necessitating a little trimming of the edges of the channel; but her skipper works manfully, losing not a moment of time, for well he knows his danger. No sooner had he got clear of the mouth of the canal than the whole field let go its anchorages above and came bodily down, completely closing the passage that we had made. Had our beloved craft been within the vise-like grip, the termination of the canoe cruise might have been recorded on the 3d of December instead of the 3d of February following.

Within a stone's throw of the camp which we had just left there was an enormous pile of driftwood of many cords, so tumbled together by the action of the flood that a fire once started would have a thorough draft and consume the entire pile. As this wood is of no use to any one, and in times of high water only adds to the dangers of navigation, Bar-

nacle concludes that it had better be out of the way, and throwing a brand into it, soon has the satisfaction of seeing the flames mount higher and higher, while the black smoke ascends in a spiral column into the pure air of this cloudless Sunday morning. All the morning, as we looked back, we could see the cloud of smoke rising from Barnacle's bonfire.

CHAPTER XX.

IN WHICH WE PADDLE INTO THE MISSISSIPPI.

AT noon we made a short halt and had some coffee and a light dinner, and then on against the cold wind that had put in an appearance about an hour before. No sign of life had been met with during the day; therefore it was with much pleasure that we sighted the tall smokestacks of a steamer coming down the river, and still more when we discovered that she was towing ahead of her the flatboat of our friend, Capt. Trotter. Why not take a tow and get out of this icy region? No sooner said than we prepare to attempt the hazardous feat of catching on to the tow while under full headway. Quickly bending an extra line on the end of the painter, in order that we might have a greater amount of slack, it was coiled on the deck in front of me. Signaling to the men on the flat that we wanted to be taken in tow, Barnacle took one side of the flat and I the other. The crew divided into two groups, one to take the Comfort's line and the other that of the Aurora. Slacking up with our paddling, we allowed the canoes to drift until the bow of the flat was within

a hundred feet of us, when we paddled hard and got under good headway as the blunt bow came abreast of us, when I dropped my paddle and gave the line a toss. It was caught by those on deck, and slackened up gradually until the Aurora was lying by the side of the flat, ahead of the steamer Grace Morris. Mounting the deck, I found that the Comfort had been as successful as the Aurora, and was moored alongside. We modestly received the congratulations of the flatboat crew on the successful issue of a hazardous experiment. Had the painter of either canoe parted as the strain was brought on it on catching on, craft and skipper must have gone under the guards of the steamer, and in all probability have been ground to pieces by the huge wheel as it beat the waters.

I learned that Capt. Trotter, fearing that the "cold snap" would freeze his boat in and ruin his cargo of potatoes, had chartered the steamer to tow him to Cairo, from whence, with the addition of the current of the Mississippi, he would soon be enabled to drift out of the reach of ice. Of course we received an invitation to remain on board until we reached Cairo, and we needed no urging to accept the kind hospitality. With all hands at the ropes, the canoes were soon hauled on board out of the danger of being thrown against the side of the flat by the swell of passing steamers. I now had a chance to examine into the damage done by the ice in the morning's struggle, and found that the Aurora had been cut almost through her planking at the bow, just on the

waterline. Carefully drying the parts, I filled them with beeswax, which remained impervious to water during the remainder of the cruise. About the middle of the afternoon we passed the mouth of the Wabash River, and by the time the sun took his departure we were passing Cave-in-Rock, a cavern sixty feet in diameter, which about the year 1800 was the rendezvous of a band of outlaws who plundered the passing boats and not unfrequently murdered the crews. Had we not been on the boat, I would have stopped long enough to make an exploration of this famous retreat. We still have the great State of Kentucky on our left, while on the right the State of Illinois has its eastern boundary.

Again I spread my blankets on the same plank which a few nights ago had served me for a couch, and was not awakened until long after daylight, which had been retarded by the dark, leaden clouds that overspread the sky and threatened rain before the day was far advanced. As I went on deck to wash off some of the charcoal that had blackened my hands through handling the potatoes that had been baked in the ashes of the forecastle stove the evening before, I noticed that we were passing Mound City, which derives its name from another of those relics of a pre-historic race. Lighting the after-breakfast pipe, I ascended to the pilot-house, from which I beheld in the distance the city of Cairo, Ill., looking like a dot on the low level prairie. The river had widened out so that it resembled a lake for several miles, while its waters had lost that clearness that had

characterized them for so many miles. I was told that this discoloration was caused by the contribution of the Tennessee River. As we approached the low point of land on which the city of Cairo is situated, I got a glimpse of the Mississippi, which, as the pilot remarked, "was so crooked that it would break a northern eel's back to follow its tortuous course." It was nearly ten o'clock when the great wheel of the steamer ceased its whirling and the lines of the flat were made fast to the trunk of a large sycamore tree that lay stranded on the face of the levee. This old fellow bore many scars, no doubt received on the long voyage he had taken ere being laid at length within sight of the great "Father of Waters."

Springing ashore I mounted the railroad track that stretches along the levee on the city front, and while Barnacle gets the canoes ready for the launch, I go to the post office and receive letters from my northern home. The official here had been more attentive to the notice on the envelope—to be held until called for—than the one at Evansville, as he had held two of the letters for more than two weeks. Laying in a stock of provisions to last two weeks at least, we tumbled them into the Aurora. Quickly divesting myself of my shore toggery, my wee craft is launched and we rapidly skim over the two miles between us and the debouchure of the Ohio into the Mississippi. The steam whistles and the ringing of bells in the mud-imbedded city astern of us announces twelve o'clock as we shoot from the waters of the Ohio into the rolling dark-yellow waves of the mighty Missis-

sippi as it sweeps off to the left with many twists and whirls. We have now left behind us the Ohio River, down which we have paddled many hundreds of miles, but we have made but little more than two hundred miles of southing, and of latitude but two and one-half degrees.

Heavy black clouds are rolling up from the north-west, and I fancy now and then that I can hear the mutterings of distant thunder. Notwithstanding we have done but little paddling the past two days, a feeling of *ennui* seems to have possession of us, caused probably by the sudden change from the severe cold to the uncomfortable warmth of to-day, and we begin to look for an early camp site, but it is four o'clock before we find one. The spot chosen was a grayish-blue clay bank, smooth and hard as a floor. As we are on the concave side of the bend, we find but little driftwood, scarcely enough to cook our supper, but we need little, as the meal is hardly finished ere we are driven to the shelter of the cabins of our craft by a heavy down-pour of rain, which is so dense that we can scarcely see to the middle of the stream. As the evening wears on the thunder and lightning gradually diminish and pass away to the east, leaving a light pattering rain, which lulls me into my first sleep on this great river.

CHAPTER XXI.

WHICH FINDS US NEITHER AFLOAT NOR ASHORE.

"WELL, well, well! If this is to be the kind of camp-ground we are to have all the way down this river, I don't know what we are to do." It is morning and that's Barnacle talking out there; but what on earth is the matter with the man? Suuck slap-suuck sla-a-ap, "did you ever see such mud?" I was little more than half awake when the first words were spoken, but a moment later I am listening intently. Again that sound, resembling that which is made by a person's foot when it is drawn slowly from thick mud, is borne to my ears.

"Hello, Barnacle, what's up?"

"Nothing, only I guess we won't get breakfast here."

Pulling my rubber shoes on over my canvas slippers, I throw aside the tent flap and step out hurriedly. Had the weather been cold I could have sworn that it was ice that caused my feet to fly out from under me so quickly and brought my helpless body into such violent contact with the coaming of the canoe. But I learned better the moment I attempted to gather myself up, for my feet were held

so fast that with all the force I could muster I could scarcely move them from the tenacious clay into which they had shot. Barnacle was enjoying my predicament; he had been in the same fix a few moments before, and now stood about ten feet from me, his feet hidden from sight beneath the clay and water. The rain had converted the smooth, hard clay bank into a deep bed of a soft, mortar-like consistency, in which it was almost impossible to move about. Everything was smeared with the vile grayish clay. My overshoes, being a size too large for my slippers, had been left where my feet first struck, and I was moving about in the clay up to my ankles. By using much caution, I reached the water's edge and succeeded in scraping off some of the slimy mud. Every time I lifted my feet I brought up with them a great weight of the river bottom that clung to the shoes until I set them down, when it would give me the sensation of falling as it yielded to my weight. I managed to get the tent unfastened from the forward part of the canoe, but was unable to reach the stern, owing to the steep decline of the bank, a slip on which would have shot me into the boiling waters.

A short distance below us we could make out what appeared to be a sandy point, and to this we decided to go and prepare our morning meal. I fished my overshoes out of the depths with the end of my paddle, and piled them, mud and all, on deck; then getting my feet well braced, I pushed the Aurora with all my might, but she would not budge an inch.

I couldn't even rock her from side to side. I looked back of me to see how Barnacle was making out. There he stood, ankle deep in the mud, his hands and clothing smeared full of the gritless clay. He had been no more successful than I, and protested that he "couldn't get his canoe off, and would have to wait until a rise in the river floated her." I prepared to make one more attempt to float the Aurora, and placing the mainmast under my feet, I got a low hold on the canoe, and then gave a lift that caused my back to ache for days after. Away she went down the slippery bank and plunged into the water. But where was I? Stretched at full length on my stomach in the nasty, glutinous mass. Words fail me with which to describe my feelings or appearance as I finally gave up all hope of ever appearing like myself again. Barnacle sees me in this humiliating position, but, for a wonder, doesn't laugh; he is too mad for that—you couldn't provoke a smile on his angular features at this time with one of the funniest of funny sayings. I went to his assistance, and we seized hold of the Comfort and swung her around so that she might be slid down the same incline which the Aurora had left clear. As I am fishing the mast out of the mire Barnacle takes the stern painter of his canoe in hand and gives her a haul with all his might; but she doesn't budge—it is her skipper that makes a sudden move and is now in the same position in the mud that I was a short time back. On the edge of my cockpit coaming I laugh until my sides ache.

"Do you want any help? Shall I come to you?" I ask.

"Help?" Thunder, no. Haven't I got all I can do to take care of myself without hauling you around?"

"All right, old man;" and I draw the Aurora to me and clamber on board, smearing deck, cushions and tent with the slimy river deposit. I am now afloat, and have a chance to watch Barnacle as I scrape the tenacious clay from my hands and clothing. He follows my example, and soon there are two of us scraping, and thankful that there is now a prospect of breakfast. The point to which we are bound is but a few hundred yards below us, but it required a greater length of time to paddle it than a like distance had ever done before. The cause is explained as we haul out on the fair, sandy point and find not less than one hundred and fifty pounds of clay hanging along the keel of each canoe. Some of this remained in the joints of my boat's bottom until after leaving Memphis; even the friction of the water over this long distance failed to dislodge it, and many days elapsed before we rid our clothing and impedimenta of traces of the mud; in fact, as I write I can see some of it on the sail which is now laid by as a souvenir of the voyage.

CHAPTER XXII.

SOME GLIMPSES OF MISSISSIPPI RIVER LIFE.

WHILE we are eating our rather late breakfast a shanty-boat passes, on which is a sign in large letters, "Sewing Machines Repaired and Fixtures for Sale." We afterward saw this boat moored at Mrs. French's Landing, about three miles below Hickman, Ky. Although I had no sewing machine to be repaired, I called at the floating shop, where I met the wife of the itinerant, who said her "man had gone back into the country on business and to buy some stores and a new caliker dress." She told me that he made a good living. In the spring they would be down on the lower Mississippi, and there would get a steamer to tow them up to the higher settlements, where they would again commence their floating journey down stream. "He has his regular customers, he has, and they allers wait for him to come round," said she.

The current of the Mississippi here attains a speed of about four miles per hour, and as we are quite fresh, we make a good run under paddle until we reach a point one mile above Columbus, Ky. Here

we catch a breeze from the northwest that warrants us in making sail, and we almost fly past the town. Following the course of the channel, we are led to the left into a deep bend under the high chalk bluffs and opposite Island No. 5. A moment later I discover that the current has increased almost to a millrace speed. Hello, what is this? Over goes the boom, and the canoe gives a lurch and is almost immediately headed up stream, then as quickly is on her downward course, the boom just grazing the top of my head as it flies over to port. Not more than fifty feet are run, when she goes through almost the same maneuver again. I am thoroughly bewildered now, and lose no time in getting the canvas off her. I look in shore, and there is the *Comfort* swinging round in a circle, her skipper making frantic efforts to head her in some direction, and yet both canoes are making good time down stream. I afterward learned that the Columbus Whirlpools had always been considered dangerous to very small craft.

The river now broadens into lake-like proportions, and the wind sweeps across the low Mississippi shore with such force that it kicks up a choppy sea which is very dampening to our decks and sails. Still we carry a full spread for a couple of miles, until the channel takes a turn to the Missouri shore and we are compelled to run close-hauled, when the wind comes down with such force that it can best be described as a canoe gale. As I have no way of reefing, I am forced to take off my mainsail, and while so engaged the *Comfort* passes me, the short seas

sending the spray flying all over her skipper. Whew! What a blast that was! Hello! there goes something off the Comfort's deck—two articles, but both together. What can they be? Ha, ha! Barnacle got a drenching that time, and his mast bent like a reed. He has let go his halliard now, and down comes his sail. I am chasing him with my mizzen set forward. "Hello, Barnacle, what was that I saw fly off your after deck?" He looks behind him, and discovers that his rubber shoes, which he had laid there to dry, have gone on an independent voyage toward the great Gulf.

The gale had now become so severe and the short, choppy seas so vicious, we made a landing on a gravelly point on the Kentucky shore, but as no driftwood was handy we made all things snug in the canoes, and put out under paddle for the Missouri shore, where the dense forest growth and high bank would afford us shelter from the gale, which came in cutting blasts. I have said, somewhere in this book, "this was the hardest paddle I ever had," but that was no comparison to this trip across the Mississippi against a wind that fairly picked the water up and dashed it against us in sheets. Had it not been that the powerful current was setting us to the shore, we would have been forced to retreat to the point from which we started. Almost exhausted we reached a favorable point for a camp beneath a high forest-crowned bank. All about us there was an abundance of driftwood in the shape of fence rails, many of them of fine black walnut, slabs and cordwood, and now

and then a railroad tie. As we had not protected ourselves with oilskins while on the river during the blow, we came ashore in rather a moist condition; so, contrary to our custom, we immediately built a fire and made some coffee before attending to anything else. With the decline of the sun, the wind drops and the temperature becomes much milder as the evening advances. The large tent is pitched close under the bank, parallel with the river. In front of it, not more than ten feet away, we have a roaring fire, which sends not only light but heat through the open front of the tent, where Barnacle is lying on his back enjoying a snoring solo.

I threw a broad board down in front of a large log beside the fire, and on it spread my rug and cushions. On this comfortable seat I reclined and made up my log for the day, and then enjoyed the pipe of kin-nickinic as I built castles in the bed of glowing coals before me. The cracking of a stick and rustling of the dry leaves on the bank above startled me from my reverie. Instinctively I reached in the tent for my revolver and carried my hand to my right hip to make sure that my stout belt knife was in its accustomed place. Instantly I was hailed from above with: "Fo' de Lawd, massa, doan ye shoot! we jiss wants to git warm by de fiah." Looking up to the top of the bank, I could now make out the forms of four darkies. I immediately invited them to come down. Their story was that they had been employed as roustabouts on one of the St. Louis and New Orleans packets, and one of them, having had a dis-

pute with the mate of the boat, was receiving a sound thrashing, when the other three pitched in and turned the tide of battle. The captain ran the steamer ashore, drove the quartet up the bank, and left them to shift for themselves, supperless and penniless. Seeing the light of our fire, they had made their way cautiously to it, and now begged that they might be allowed to remain until daylight, when they would continue their difficult tramp through the cane and brier thickets until they could find some one who would set them across the river to the Kentucky shore, whence they would work their way to Columbus. Notwithstanding their penniless condition, they seemed to be in a merry mood, and spent the hours until long past midnight in singing plantation melodies and cracking jokes at one another's expense. The bass and tenor were excellent, but the rich falsetto of the largest fellow of the party astonished me with its softness. Two of them had made a sort of bunk out of rails beside the fire, where they were stretched at full length, while the other two had perched themselves among the branching roots of a large stump that projected from the bank almost over the fire. They were a fine, hardy-looking set of fellows, and from their youthful appearance I judged that they were all born free, but on questioning them they assured me that they had all been born in slavery. Many were the laughable stories they told of plantation life, especially those that occurred during the war. On viewing the canoes, one of them observed that the Aurora, with

hatches covering the cockpit, looked "jis like dat ar coffin ole massa war toted to de burin'-groun' in." The big darky exclaimed: "Golly, guess it wouldn't pay for nigger to steal dat ar little boat; she'd dun roll ober an' drown him sartin sho." His remark about stealing reminded me that it would be well for us to keep a close eye on our guests, or on their departure we might miss some article of which we stood most in need. At one o'clock I step into the tent and awaken Barnacle, telling him that it is now his watch. The "darks" have not seen Barnacle, and as his six feet two inches are at length revealed, I can see their white eyeballs roll from one to the other. Daybreak sees all hands at work, the negroes piling wood on the fire, while Barnacle finds a piece of bacon for each of my dark-skinned guests, to which we add a half dozen crackers each and a cup of coffee. They seem very grateful for the light breakfast, and with a shake of the hand all around they disappear into the dense thicket, while we clean up and pack the canoes for an early start.

After being out but a short time we sighted an up-river bound passenger steamer. I had on one occasion, while on the Ohio River, witnessed the manner in which flatboatmen procure papers from the steamers; and as we have been without the morning paper at the breakfast table for some time, I determine to attempt getting one, flatboatman fashion. Paddling directly for the steamer, I came within hailing distance, and began calling out at the top of my voice, "Plee-a-s-e th-r-o-w me a pa-a-a-per,"

drawling the words out in a sing-song sort of manner. When this had been repeated and I had gone through the pantomime of reading a paper, both the officers and passengers seemed to vie with one another to see who would be first to get a paper into my hands. I paddled close to the steamer's guards and caught two folded papers, while Barnacle picked up a third that had gone overboard. We swung our caps in response to the waving of handkerchiefs from the deck of the City of Natchez and paddled on, I with a copy of the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, twelve days old, spread out on the hatch before me, while Barnacle had a Vicksburgh daily four days old. We had time simply to glance at the contents and learn of the terrible storm on the Atlantic coast, the heavy snow storms in the Northern and Eastern States and the intensely cold weather throughout the entire country, when the wind came off the Missouri shore and gave us a favorable breeze, under which we ran until about mid-day, when it left us as suddenly as it had come. The atmosphere is unusually mild, and I paddle with my head, arms and chest bare, and have concluded that we are out of the region of chilling blasts. The thought of entering the sunny South was indeed welcome to men who had fought wind and wave, amid snow and ice, for so many days.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN WHICH BARNACLE CRAWLS INTO A HOLE.

WE could now hear the dull reports of shotguns far to our left, and on inquiry of a shanty-boatman as to the cause of such an unusual amount of firing, learned that they came from the guns of the duck-hunters on Reelfoot Lake, distant, as the crow flies, not more than four miles, but to reach it one must go many miles down river, and then up Reelfoot Bayou, as the country between us and the lake is an impenetrable swamp. This lake is the result of a series of earthquakes which occurred in 1811-13, when large areas of country were upheaved, while others were depressed far below the level of the Mississippi, whose waters ran in and converted what may have been a fertile plantation into a large lake-like sheet of water, out of which protruded the tops of tall cypress trees, and over whose surface had spread a rank growth of vegetable matter, which yearly attracts immense numbers of waterfowl to feed upon it. By reference to the chart of the river I find we are in the vicinity of Island No. 10, made famous during the great Civil War. It should

lie to the left as we pass down the river, with the steamboat channel some distance from its shore. The site of Fort Donaldson should also be to the left of us, but in a deep bend. The mild atmosphere induces us to go along leisurely, while we study the geography of the river, but cannot make it fit the chart. This is an indication of the remorseless destructiveness of the great Mississippi. Of Island No. 10 there remains to-day no sign, save a low sand bar, on which are stranded a few stumps and drift logs, which the next high water will carry off, while the channel makes a long sweep to the left of where the island was located, with its fortifications and heavy guns. Of Fort Donaldson there is no vestige left; the steamboat now runs over the site of the once formidable earthworks and the graves of the blue and the gray.

My attention has been so absorbed by the associations of the scenes through which we have been drifting that I have not noticed the leaden-hued clouds slowly sweeping up from the horizon, and the uncomfortable sultriness of the atmosphere. Night is rapidly falling, and we have struck no place within the past eight miles that would answer even for a bivouac. All along the navigable portions of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, at every turn of the channel, the Government has stationed a beacon light, consisting of a lantern set in a box-like concern on a post, placed in the most conspicuous position as a guide to the river pilots. We sweep around the bend near the site of Fort Donaldson, and then

shoot across to the Missouri side, heading for the beacon which we can make out far in the distance, hoping that near it we may find a place to land. Sure enough, there is a place, but so swiftly are we borne along by the rapid current that we dare not attempt a landing among the fallen trees and heaps of driftwood for fear we may come to grief. We head for the next beacon, which we can see looking like the light from a tallow dip in the distance. Away we go across the broad expanse of water, and when in mid-stream meet a steamer on her way up river, but the light is so faint that we cannot make out her name. Before reaching the beacon we find a short sandy beach on the Kentucky shore, beneath the shelter of a thick forest growth. Having eaten a light lunch only at noon, we have appetites that demand a bountiful supper; and a hearty one we have, seated about the glorious camp-fire, the like of which I have never seen except on the lonely shores of this changeable river. In order that we may make an early start on the morrow, the big tent is not pitched and as little unpacking done as possible.

While reclining about the fire, smoking and jotting down notes of the day's run, the river ripples along within twenty feet of us. Barnacle tells me the story of a storm he once witnessed on the coast of South America, being reminded of it by the closeness of the atmosphere to-night. Hardly had he finished the narrative ere we are brought to our feet by a moaning sound from across the river, which in a moment's time increased to a roar, accompanied

by the snapping and falling of trees and all the unmistakable signs of a tempest. Quicker than I can write it, the wind has leaped the broad river, and striking our fire, catches the brands and whirls them in all directions. Grasping long poles that are at hand, we rake the coals and sticks out toward the water, trampling some under foot and kicking others in all directions; this was done that we might save from burning the canoes and sails that were distant not more than twenty feet from the fire. The wind is a tempest, and while we have been taking care of our fire it has gone tearing through the forest, snapping the tops off some of the trees, while it has leveled others to the earth. The Aurora, which had been lying with her stern to the water's edge, has been turned fore and aft the stream by the force of the wind, and the white blankets spread on her captain's comfortable bed have been well coated with sand and ashes. But the fury of the wind has passed, and is succeeded by a brisk breeze from the north, which blows upon us with its chilling influences, compelling the donning of heavier clothing and the renewal of the fire which had been so unceremoniously extinguished. The wind becomes very cold as it comes down on us from the ice-bound north.

"Early to bed and early to rise," I say, as I crawl into my snug retreat with a thick coat thoroughly warmed at the fire wrapped closely about my feet. I hear Barnacle, as he slowly pushes his length into his cabin, and then all is still save the moan of the wind through the trees and the snap and crack

of the fire, and I drop off into a sound sleep. I am suddenly awakened by a loud bang, as though another canal-driver were pelting stones at my canoe. "Hi, there! what's up?" I call out. "Why in thunder don't you turn out? Why do you want to lie there and freeze?" That's Barnacle out there, but his voice sounds as though it had a "tremolo stop" attached to it. I find he has awakened me by accidentally striking the Aurora with the end of a pole that he was throwing on the fire. He tells me that it is so cold that he cannot keep warm in his canoe, and is now going to try what effect a fire will have on him. I am not aware that it is cold; I am very comfortable, but I discover that my breath has congealed on my blankets. I can hear the wind moaning and whistling through the trees, and ask Barnacle how the weather is, and on his saying, "We can't leave here as long as the wind blows this way," I draw my head beneath the blankets and go to sleep. Long after daylight I awoke again and turned out, finding the ground frozen hard and a fringe of ice along the shore. I can now appreciate the comforts of my little cabin in which I have slept so snugly, and almost resolve never to pitch the tent again for my own convenience. But where is Barnacle? Nothing of the fire remains but a couple of smoking sticks. I look into his canoe; he is not there. I call to him, and from out the depths of the timber above me comes the answer, "I'm up here in a hole." Mounting the bank, I catch sight

of the smoke from his fire, and am soon by his side in a depression of the earth made by the uprooting of a large gum tree. By building a framework of poles and covering it with the sails and tent, we are enabled to make a snug shelter, under which we cook and eat our breakfast.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FROZEN IN THE SUNNY SOUTH.

ALL day the wind continued to blow, keeping us in our hole, and by four o'clock, although the wind had less fury in its blasts, the cold had increased. About this time a young man came along, and stopping to inspect our primitive habitation, told us that he had charge of the Government lights, and lived about a mile and a half distant. He said, "We have plenty of room in the house, and father will be glad to see you," and insisted on our accompanying him back to the house to spend the night. Packing our blankets in their rubber bags and making all things snug about camp, we followed our new-found friend, and were within a half hour sitting by the side of a roaring fire. Mr. Larry Everett, our host, together with his three sons, entertained us through the long evening with anecdotes of the operations of the armies in this neighborhood during the war, and with accounts of the destructiveness of the Mississippi. I mentioned my search for Island No. 10. "Yes, a great portion of that island is now the bank in front

of this door. When I bought this farm, a few years ago, the house stood within three hundred feet of the river's bank. A freshet came the following year and carried it away, together with all its outbuildings and ten head of horned cattle and seven sheep. I then built this house, about three hundred feet back from the river. Five years ago another freshet came, changed the channel and built up the bank in front of me, so that now my house stands as many hundred yards from the river as it formerly did feet."

Mr. Everett's case is not an uncommon one. Many plantations have been swept away at various points on the river, and in several instances planters who have owned land and voted in Kentucky at the beginning of one week, with the river flowing in sight from their verandas, have found themselves at the end of the week citizens of Missouri, with the steam-boat channel several miles in the rear of their homes, while a broad lake may be occupying its former location.

When the young lightkeeper assured us that there was "plenty of room in the house," he evidently meant on the floor, for that was where we spread our blankets, in company with the boys. All the houses on the river bank are built on stilts as a precaution against being carried away in times of high water. The open spaces beneath the floor, among the poorer class of farmers—such as was our host—are generally a refuge for the hogs and dogs. Frequently, during the long hours of the night, I was awakened

by a short, sharp bark from one of the dogs, accompanied by a grunt and squeal from the pigs, as they fought for closer companionship and protection from the cold blasts of wind that reached my bones through the open cracks of the floor. Drawn up in a knot, with chin almost touching my knees, I turned out at sunrise, and on going to the rear of the house, my surprise may be imagined at finding the mercury marking three degrees below zero. "Colder," Mr. Everett said, "than I have ever known it in all the long years of my life here." After a breakfast of bacon, corn bread and coffee, we returned to our camp, where I would have had a much more comfortable night had I chosen to remain and sleep in my own quarters.

By ten o'clock the wind had not risen, and the atmosphere, although still cold, had been moderated somewhat by the influence of the sun, which shone from a clear sky. It required fully an hour for us to get the duffle down to the canoes from the hole we had occupied in the woods. The canoes were launched over a ridge of ice which had formed along the shore, and I was forced to paddle most of the day with the Aurora's masts stepped, as they had been frozen so tightly in the tubes that I could not remove them until thawed out. About five miles below camp a turn in the river brought us into the teeth of a brisk breeze which had now risen with considerable strength, throwing water over decks, where it froze, and the spray flying over our arms cased them in ice, and often we were compelled to

beat the ice off the loom of the paddle to reduce its weight. With cap drawn tightly down over my ears, and a pair of long woolen stockings over the heavy gloves on my hands, I was as comfortable as could be expected under the circumstances. Having paddled about two miles further, I missed the sight of the familiar nose of the *Comfort*, and on looking astern saw that the captain was not paddling, but beating his hands against one another. I held the *Aurora* against the current, and the *Comfort* was rapidly borne down to me, when Barnacle said: "Doctor, I must get shelter, or I will perish." Here was an alarming situation, surely—my companion in danger of freezing to death, and no house, shanty-boat nor steamer near. A break in the bank comes into sight, and I urge Barnacle to paddle for it. His hands are so cold that he can scarcely handle his paddle, but it is best that he receive no assistance as long as he can gain the shore unaided. The more exertion he makes the sooner will the circulation be restored and the blood go racing through his veins. A few moments later and we have gained the shelter of the shore; the *Comfort* is hauled out, and active preparations made for the restoration of Barnacle. The veteran camper requires but a short time in which to get a good fire started, and in less than half an hour Barnacle was feeling like himself again, and did full justice to the pot of coffee which steamed by the side of the fire. It is useless to attempt any further progress to-day, and we make preparations for remaining over night. I do not propose to weary my

readers with the details of the everyday life of this vast, always rising or falling river. For hundreds of miles the same monotonous scenery is to be met with. Great belts of cottonwood trees in endless succession, low bars stretching out into the river, crowding the steamers so closely to the shore that in many places the great paddle-wheel must be held motionless until the vessel drifts by, and from which the wind sweeps the sand in clouds, reminding me of the illustrations I have seen of the sand storms on the great deserts.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHICH INTRODUCES JUDGE LYNCH AND MARK TWAIN.

OUR commissary department is getting low, and it is with a shout of delight that I spy a small log building on the high Missouri bank. It bears a sign, "U. S. Mail." No need to ask the question, "Is this a store?" All mail stations on this section of the river are posts for trade and barter of all descriptions. As I mount the bank the first object of interest to meet my view is a long rope with a hangman's noose on the end, swaying in the morning breeze from the branch of a tall cypress tree. Here is the mark of the summary manner in which justice is meted out to the offender against the laws of the land. As I enter the door of the cabin, a motley group of men in broad-rimmed felt hats, red shirts, and trousers tucked into long-legged boots, which have spurs strapped to the heels, turn toward me with a look of surprise which is so marked that I at once state my business and explain that my little ship is moored to the bank a few hundred yards above, and invite them all to go and have a look at her. They tell me they have heard of us. The

mailboat, when last there, left some papers, and the pilot told them that the "Yankee canoemen from away up north" were at Cairo when he left there. While the postmaster-storekeeper is putting up the goods that I have called for, I make a cautious remark about the noose that I saw on landing. "Yes, they hung 'Red-necked Bill' there, about a month ago, for horse-stealing, and there are two or three more fellows about these parts that will be served in the same way one of these days." Although I had never stolen a horse, it was with feelings of intense relief that I boarded the Aurora and pushed off from the scene of Judge Lynch's court.

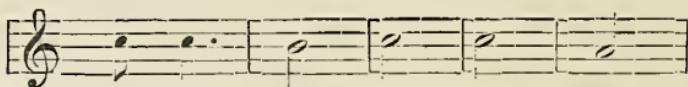
During the afternoon we came up with and passed a floating sawmill and carpenter-shop combined. In appearance these mills are similar to the "kick-up" steamers. They tie up to the bank when a planter wants his timber sawed or building erected, and when the job is completed go on up or down stream to the next engagement. At the terminus of a long reach we come upon the site of Fort Pillow. No traces of the fortifications now remain, the remorseless river having swallowed up the greater portion of what was once the highest and most important bluff on the river. Now and then we come upon the small clearings of the negro planter, in which he raises cotton, corn and a little tobacco for his private use. To-day we have passed some large fields of unpicked cotton, the opened bolls giving the field the appearance of being covered with snow glistening in the sunlight. To obtain some eggs, we made

a landing before one of these small negro settlements. A great fat negress, with skirts reaching little below the knees, sleeves rolled up to above the elbows, neck and breast bare, came down to the shore with a water-pail on her head. Spying the Aurora, she exclaimed: "Fo' de Lawd, honey, what kind of a little boat does yer call dat? How long is yer gwine ter stay? Jis wait till I fetch James Henry ter see dat little boat." And setting her pail down, she waddled off up the steep bank more like a big bear than a human being, while a dozen or more of her neighbors, men, women and children, gathered about the canoes. Not more than five minutes had elapsed before I saw the great dark bulk of the enthusiastic negress come sweating and puffing down the bank, with a little imp of blackness sitting on her head. Standing with arms akimbo, she called out, as her eyes rolled toward the sky, "Dar, James Henry, duz yer see dat little canoe—duz yer see dat genman in his little canoe? Dat little canoe done come all de way from de Noff. Duz yer want to sit on de little boat?" And taking him from his perch on her wooly crown, she sat him squat on the forward deck. I had been holding the bow against the bank with the paddle, and it required but an instant for me to gently push the canoe off, when the youngster set up a howl that reminded me of a "cat in our back yard." The mother of James Henry, fearing that I intended to kidnap her offspring, dropped on her knees, and clasping her hands, raised them toward heaven, praying, "Gor-a-mighty bring

back my picaninny." Fearing that the young imp might fall off and drown, I returned him to his terror-stricken mother, who was heartily laughed at by the assembled company.

'Barnacle now returned with the spoils of his hunt, and we paddle off in search of a camp. Until within a few days ago we have been able to use the river water for drinking and cooking purposes, but now, owing no doubt to the floods in some of its tributaries, the water is so thick with the muddy solution that we cannot see the bright bottom of a tin pail through it, and it becomes necessary to set it to settle over night, that we may have it clear for coffee-making on the morrow.

It was while lying in my snug quarters on board that I heard a steamer coming down the river, her wheel slowly revolving while the "leadsman" heaves the lead, and at each cast sings out the depth in a not unmusical tone:



Quar - ter less three. Mark twain.

(Quarter of a fathom less than three fathoms—16 feet 6 inches—and mark of two fathoms—12 feet). "Mark Twain," the humorist, was a Mississippi River pilot, and even at that time was writing humorous articles for the press. There is an old story among the river pilots to the effect that "at the foot of President's Island the humorist had finished an article and wanted a *nom de plume*. Just then the leadsman

cried out, ‘Mark twain,’ and down it went at the foot of that article, and to many a one since.”

About noon of the next day the bows of our canoes grated on the stone-paved levee of the city of Memphis. We had directed that our mail should be sent here; and we eagerly thread our way through the vile-smelling streets to the post office, where we find our letters, some of which have been held for us many days.

The second day after leaving Memphis, we met the U. S. snagboat De Russy, and on invitation from the captain, went on board and dined. These boats, of which there are several on the Mississippi, are employed in picking up and clearing away the enormous masses of trees, stumps and debris constantly borne down on the current, and lodged in the channel. The river is continually undermining the banks and trees; sometimes acres of them at a time are precipitated into the river, when the fluvial soil is washed from their roots, and they are swept away down stream, generally lodging in the channel and presenting most dangerous obstacles to navigation. These are familiarly termed “snags.” The snagboat is a powerfully built steamer, having a double bow with a V space between, heavily sheathed, with plates of iron. Over the space between the bows is a powerful derrick with a projecting arm, over which a chain is run with a set of grapnels at one end. This grapnel is let down to the bed of the channel, and as the steamer slowly advances, catches the submerged tree or log, when “the doctor” (a small engine used for

the purpose) is set in motion and the snag drawn to the surface over the plates of iron between the bows, and there cut into small pieces by axmen and allowed to again go adrift.

I asked the pilot of the De Russy whether I should avail myself of the cut-offs of the Mississippi, and was warned that although I would save in point of distance I would lose in time, as the strength of the current always follows the channel. He assured me that I would not only find very little current, but in many of the chutes scarcely water enough to float my canoe. Said he, "Three miles below here you will turn to the left and go through what was last winter an old 'cut-off,' which had become almost a lake, dammed at the upper end, but to-day the cut-off is the stream's channel, while the old channel is the cut-off."

As we swing around the Walnut Bend we sight a shanty-boat moored to the bank. Strewn about on the shore are many articles of household furniture, and a hog and some fowls are roaming about at will. At one end of the shanty sat a young negro, across whose knees rested a rifle of a pattern seldom seen in these days of fixed ammunition and breechloaders, but which in the days of Daniel Boone was a terror. A pleased expression is on his countenance as we push up to his perch, and he exhibits a fine large wild goose that he had shot but a few moments before, one of a flock that we had kept in sight since leaving the snagboat. This man had charge of the Government lights, and as the surrounding country

is subject to inundation twice a year, he lives in a floating home rather than to risk being washed out of one on shore.

Every day and all day we start up immense flocks of ducks and geese from the long, low sand bars. At our approach they rise into the air with a great flapping and whistling, and go sailing off over our heads with a quacking and honking that at times is almost deafening. We look for the wind to drop as the sun declines below the forest of cottonwoods, but instead it increases in strength, blowing the sand into our faces as we paddle close under the bars for protection. A deep indentation of the high sandy bank on the Arkansas shore is chosen for the night's camp, and we haul out, congratulating ourselves on the record of forty-six miles as the day's run, most of which has been made against a cold head wind.

The next day breaks with the wind still blowing a gale from the north, and the ground frozen like adamant. We pitched the large tent last night, and heaped the moist sand well up about its sides as a precaution against the searching wind, and then filled the interior with a deep carpeting of leaves. Of course, our canvas house is now frozen fast, and we must wait until a change in the temperature softens the frozen wall. Here, having discarded the suit of clothes worn so long, a brilliant idea strikes me, and soon another horse thief, whose make-up is a pair of dilapidated trousers and a shirt of blue, evidently much too small for the well-developed chest of the criminal, hangs dangling by the neck from the end

of a pole, which reaches several feet out from the bank and over the whirling waters. The deception is a fair one. The piece of cloth, part of an old coat lining that serves as a black-cap, hides the distorted features, while the wide belt of cottonwood bark with the flesh side out, gives a semi-military effect to the effigy. As the steamers ply on the river or the flatboat is borne on the current, their occupants have before their eyes a dangling, swaying evidence of swift Arkansas justice.

CHAPTER XXVI.

IN WHICH I HAVE RE COURSE TO A MEPHISTOPHELEAN RUSE.

The morning of our departure from "Execution Camp" was mild and without a wind. Helena was reached at noon, and leaving the canoes in charge of a fishmonger, we walked across the low neck of land between town and river, and entered the filthy, muddy streets. Entering the post office, the polite clerk handed us each a package of letters, saying, "I have been looking for you for some days, so had your mail ready." We return to the fishmonger's stand, where we are shown a sample of the catfish peculiar to the Mississippi River. This one weighed 80 pounds, and I was told that they are frequently caught weighing as high as 125 and 150 pounds. The head of the specimen shown would fill a half bushel measure. Below Helena we came to the site of Napoleon, Arkansas, which not more than twenty years ago contained a population of more than twelve thousand souls, and had flourishing stores and warehouses and all the indications of prosperity. The United States Government here maintained a marine

hospital in a large brick building. Mr. Bishop, in his "Four Months in a Sneakbox," says: "Below the mouth of the Arkansas was the town of Napoleon, with its deserted houses, the most forlorn aspect that had yet met my eye. The banks were caving into the river day by day. Houses had fallen into the current, which was undermining the town. Here and there chimneys were standing in solitude, the buildings having been torn down and removed to other localities to save them from the insatiable maw of the river." Again, Mr. Tyson, four years later, says, referring to the above: "All this was gone when I passed. I saw nothing of the once busy Napoleon but six or seven houses, mostly shabby and dilapidated." I saw not even a chimney, not a trace of anything to indicate that a town had ever been within miles of the city; and I was told by the pilot of the steamer Port Eads that the site of the large brick hospital was now passed over by the steamers as they followed the main channel.

On a bright, mild day we passed the mouth of the Yazoo River, which was sending a flood of yellow water into the Mississippi, laden with debris of all descriptions, among which I noticed a hen coop, but as it had probably passed many a negro cabin in its course, I refrained from searching for the hen.

A short distance beyond we came in sight of Vicksburg, and as we slowly approached it over the long reach of broad water, I thought of the stirring scenes in 1863, when the Union forces laid siege to the city, and of its long and determined resistance.

Then the river ran immediately in front of the city. To pass some gunboats to a point lower down, Gen. Grant caused a canal to be cut across a low peninsula from one bend of the river to another, in the hope that the waters of the Mississippi might be diverted through it, and thus open a channel through which his boats might pass, out of the range of the frowning batteries on the heights above the city. But the Mississippi is its own engineer, and refused to be led by the device of man; and to this day "Grant's Cut-off" has never been utilized, save as a grave for many of the negroes who were engaged in its construction. Since those days of grim war, the whimsical river has chosen to cut for itself a new channel, by which Vicksburg Landing is left at least a mile inland. But with the philosophical character of dwellers on this stream, they removed their wharf-boats a mile down the river to where the channel again cut across and gave them depth of water sufficient to land steamers.

The aspect of the country is more pleasing. There is not that monotony of interminable cottonwood thickets and low sand bars; the shores are more uniform and the timber is of much larger growth. Spanish moss is now quite frequently seen, giving to the trees a fantastic effect, as it hangs in festoons from branch to branch. Live-oak trees of great proportions are almost everywhere in view, the deep green of their leaves in strong contrast to the light gray of the moss.

About the middle of the afternoon we came upon

the wreck of the once splendid steamer Robert E. Lee, which a few weeks before had been burned, when forty of its passengers and crew perished in the flames.

The sight of broad cotton fields is now of almost hourly occurrence, and the humble cabin of the negro has given place to the more pretentious habitation of the planter of broad acres. This is the season for shipping the cotton to market, and the sight of a steamer with her nose pushed against the bank, while negroes roll the cotton bales on board, is not an unusual one, neither by day nor night. Odd-looking indeed are these steamer landings to one who has been accustomed to the well-built stone or timber piers of the Northern rivers. Here, wherever there is a sufficient depth of water, a steamer can make a landing, and it is no unusual thing to see great tiers of cotton bales on the high bank, waiting for the coming of the craft that is to freight it to the more southern market.

The weather has now become delightfully warm, and every day we make a fair run, the light rain having few terrors for us who can so effectually shut it out. The river has broadened, and the banks are so much lower that we are enabled to see much further back from the shore over the long expanse of cotton fields. Natchez is passed in the early morning. We do not run close to the city, but keep out in the strength of the current. Natchez has a more imposing aspect than any city we have yet seen on the trip.

We are enjoying our snug little camp after the

fatigues of the day. I am busy having a general "clearin' up" of the canoe and its duffle, when I am surprised by a female voice saying, "Good evenin', sah." On looking up I behold four negro women; the eldest, apparently, stepped forward and said: "Boss, has yer got any dry goods? I wants to buy a caliker dress." I assure her that I am not in that line of business. "Oh! I done thought you was peddlin'." Then followed a multitude of questions from the quartet, ending in my telling them of the nature of the expedition. Oh, fatal mistake. I wish that I could recall my words. Ere the sun had set, our camp was besieged by an army of blacks, from the gray-headed old Uncle and Aunty down to the picaninny carried in the arms of a child. They gathered about, plying us with all manner of questions, and examining the canoes and belongings. I had answered the same set of questions many times, and finally grew tired of them. I wanted to eat my supper in peace, but they persisted in remaining about us, notwithstanding I had repeatedly asked what time they eat their supper. They all seemed to be of the opinion that it was after supper time, but this was a sort of picnic for them, and it mattered not when they got supper, if at all. We were in for it and must do the best we could. Barnacle prepared the evening meal, and we sat down to it surrounded by our dusky admirers. They were well behaved, and gave us not the slightest excuse for driving them off. Having finished my supper, I proceeded to arrange the Aurora for sleeping in. I thought they would

take the hint and betake themselves off. No such good luck. My skill as a chambermaid amused and interested them exceedingly, and as I spread my blankets on the cushions, one old darky suggested that "he done get his coffin ready, saatin sho," but when I finally had the tent buttoned down, I quietly stepped inside and drew the flaps together, when a general yah-yah-yah followed from the whole gang. Some one remarked, "he done make his little boat into a house, sho nuf." I had, stowed away in my medicine chest, a box of brilliant red fire, such as is used to illuminate a theatrical stage. Emerging from the canoe with box in hand I told them that I was going to make my night cakes and then go to bed. "Doan know what yo' mean boss, what fo' kind ob cake am dat?" "Well, I will show you;" and as the crowd gathered round me, packing closer and closer, I poured a large quantity of the powder into a pannikin and touched it with a match, at the same time setting up the most fiendish yells of which I was capable, and danced about like a maniac. In an instant the whole crowd were yelling, running and tumbling over one another through the bushes and fallen timber, and nothing was seen of them again that night. My ruse had been successful and I enjoyed a night of thorough comfort.

The next morning an old bent darky put in an appearance, and after the usual salutations had been exchanged, he said: "Foah de Lord, Massa, what was dat ar las' night? done most skaad de life out ob dis chile, fo' saatin shoa."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CRESCENT CITY.

WE are now approaching New Orleans, and as we run along the "Sugar Coast," as this section is called, we see the interminable fields of cane stretching away in the distance. The stately homes of the planters are surrounded by the neat cabins of the negroes, and here and there the sugar-houses. One day we met a character whose floating house was moored in a secluded nook. He was introduced as Capt. Pete Hall, or "the old man in the shanty-boat." He was apparently about seventy years of age, tall and angular, with a sallow complexion, a good head of almost white hair falling low on his shoulders, and a gray beard covering his breast. His habitation was neat and clean, its walls covered with illustrations cut from many of the pictorial papers and magazines of the country. "Gentlemen, I am a geologist traveling in the interests of the Davenport Academy of Sciences; there is not a more finely-educated man in the State of Mississippi to-day than he who stands before you." Poor fellow; "much learning had made him mad."

It is Christmas Eve, and from my comfortable quarters can be seen bright bonfires along the shores, while rockets and Roman candles are constantly shooting heavenward. The people of these States combine the Fourth of July and Christmas festivities, for the intense heat of July holds out very slight inducements for a jollification on the anniversary of Independence Day. The levee that extends along the river has a broad summit, on which horsemen and footmen are constantly passing to and fro, and from whom salutations in English, French and Spanish are received. Here and there on the broad surface of the river we see the rakish luggers, with their Chinese-looking sails. At each of the landings there are from one to a half dozen of these moored to the bank, their dark-visaged "Dago" captains busily engaged in selling the cargo of fruits and vegetables brought from the Gulf ports. As we approached the Crescent City very little life was seen except on the river, the shore presenting a long stretch of treeless fields. Along the upper front of the city all the indications of prosperity were apparent; long lines of coal flats lined the shores, while on the banks were mills and factories. Along the lower front of the city were the masts and spars of ocean sailing craft, while the black smoke from the steamers was ascending high into the clouds, which are now threatening to pour out their aqueous contents.

On arrival at the foot of Julia street at an early hour on Christmas morning there were very few

people about. Leaving the canoes in charge of the wharf-master, we proceeded to the post office, where my eyes were gladdened by the sight of letters. I had written to a brother canoeist resident in the city that I expected to reach the end of the river trip on Christmas Day, but for him not to look for me until I reported at his office. On my way thither I met his bright and smiling face and received a most hearty welcome. Under his guidance the services of a truckman were secured, not, however, until I had promised the owner of the sorry-looking team of mules that he should receive an extra amount of compensation for his services. Even with this assurance, it was a difficult matter to induce him to transport our little craft the short distance to the head of the West End Canal. A holiday is looked on by the average Southerner as robbed of half its pleasures if one performs the slightest amount of labor from the rising to the setting of the sun. Launching the canoes on the black, foul-smelling waters of the canal, through which the drainage of the city is conducted, we dipped our paddles, and the canoes shot forward as the floodgates of heaven opened and the east wind blew strongly in our faces. My friend had engaged to meet us at the outlet of the canal, saying at parting: "While you are paddling the six miles against this wind I will attend to some business, and then take the cars out to the boat-house, and probably arrive there ahead of you at that." Sure enough, as we came in sight of the handsome boat-house of the St. Johns Rowing Club he stood on its broad

veranda, surrounded by several members of the club, who had kindly placed the freedom of the house at our disposal. Our little craft were in a few moments beneath shelter, surrounded by the many beautiful boats of the club. A few minutes by rail carried us into the city, where the ear was greeted by the blare of trumpets and the crash of brass bands heading processions. The populace lined the sidewalks and cheered them as they passed, while cannon, bombs, crackers and firearms were exploding in all directions.

During the afternoon we paid a visit to the water front, where were lying a fleet of vessels representing nearly all the nationalities of the world. Some were discharging their cargoes of foreign products, while others were being laden with the products of the soil of the Southern States, cotton, sugar, rice and tobacco; and still others into whose hulls was being poured thousands of bushels of wheat from the great Northwest. Leaving the forest of masts and spars, we strolled higher up, where are moored the steamers that ply the different watercourses of the Mississippi system. Two had just come in from St. Louis, Mo., one having in tow nine grain barges containing seven thousand tons of wheat, while another was piled high with hundreds of bales of cotton, which was already being transferred to an English bark for transportation to the mills of England. Probably the most interesting sight, to a Northern man, in this great Southern city is the old French market, in which I spent several hours among the quaint market

people, now stopping at the stall of the French-woman for a cup of the delicious black coffee which none but the French know how to make, now pausing at the stand of the Sicilian long enough to eat of delicious fruits, and then on to the bench of the fish-dealer, where I tickle the palate with a "dozen raw" from the oyster beds of Mississippi Sound.

Friday, the 29th of December, the heavily laden canoes are launched from the float of the St. Johns Rowing Club, and with a "bon voyage" from my friend, who has spared no effort to make my visit to the Crescent City a pleasant one, we paddled out on to the choppy surface of Lake Pontchartrain, and face our old enemy, the head wind. We make camp at the mouth of Bayou De John, under the shelter of some tall reeds. While gathering wood for our fire, I came upon a pile of bituminous coal lying at the water's edge, evidently washed ashore from a wreck that lay about two hundred feet off. I suggest to Barnacle that we have a coal fire, but he doubts my ability to make it burn, saying, "You have no way of making a grate for it, and without one it will not burn." Nevertheless I determine to try the experiment, and converting my sou'wester into a hod, I soon have a good stock of the coal at the tent. Building a fire of wood, I pile the coal on it, and as the black smoke rolls up I call to Barnacle that here is a fire over which he can cook our supper, but he disdains the use of coal for his galley, and insists on using his wood fire. I add fuel to my fire until I have a mass of glowing coals fully three feet in diameter and two

high. Making a soft couch of the tall grass of which there is an abundance about us, I enjoy the hours of the evening as I lie toasting my feet. As the Aurora is heavily laden, and innumerable small articles stowed in the cockpit, I do not follow my custom of sleeping in her, but share the tent with Barnacle, and fall asleep with the waters of the lake rippling on the sands not ten feet away. On awaking at an early hour, I first direct my attention to my fire, and am much pleased to find that it is still alive. With the addition of fuel and a little bellows work from my lungs, I soon have it again under way.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN WHICH WE HAVE A SKIRMISH WITH THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

By half past nine o'clock we were afloat, and following the western shore for about five miles, made sail, and soon after were abreast of the lighthouse at Point aux Herbes. Here the attentive keeper gave us the course east by north half north to the lighthouse, at the entrance to the Rigolet, eight miles distant. Setting the mariner's compass on deck before him, Barnacle led the way, and we sped merrily on out over the swelling blue waters of the lake, every stitch of our sails drawing, while the graceful craft rose and fell on the heaving brackish waters that parted from their bows. Far to the northeast we could make out the long line of shore, with its glittering sands backed by the dark green of the grove of live oaks, while to the southwest could be seen the dark cloud of smoke that hung over the Crescent City. To the south, as far as the eye could reach, was a continuation of marshes and lakelets, until it rested on the broad surface of Lake Borgue. With the favoring breeze we made the run

across to the Rigolet's Lighthouse in one hour and a half, and received a hearty welcome from the polite keeper. While looking over the light-tower and the keeper's quarters, I was very much surprised to find a beautiful Christmas tree standing in one corner of the room, laden with confections, fruits and gifts. Notwithstanding that the keeper gave us a very urgent invitation to stop over night with him, saying he could both "eat and sleep us," I could not see that he had more than room enough for his family; and as I understood that the sergeant in charge of Fort Pike had an abundance of room, I concluded to ask shelter of him, that we might not be under the necessity of camping on the low, sedgy shores. On our approach to the fort, not more than a mile distant from the lighthouse, we were greeted by the barking of several vicious-looking dogs and the squealing of numerous pigs, which seemed to have possession of the premises. My past experience with dogs on this cruise caused me to be very cautious as to how near I allowed these canines to approach before menacing them with the mast which I held in my hand as I stepped out of the canoe. Their continued barking, however, attracted the attention of the son of the Emerald Isle in charge, who ordered me to re-embark, saying that he "could not allow any one on the premises." Night was falling, and this petty officer had plenty of room to spare, if not in his own quarters, in the great barns of barracks, and I determined to make a fight for what I thought I had a perfect right to. I knew

very well that he had no orders that our sleeping in the barracks would conflict with. "Why didn't you stay at the lighthouse?" he asked. "Just like that dirty Dutchman, to send all the fellows that come down from the city for me to take care of." I explained who we were and why I asked the privilege I did, but he seemed bent on either forcing us to retrace our course to the lighthouse or take the only other alternative and sleep on the low marshes. However, after some little further plaver, I gained his consent to occupy the kitchen of the barrack in which the men of the Health Department are quartered during the prevalence of yellow fever in New Orleans and the surrounding country. Although we had lagged but a few miles, we were rather fatigued with the day's exertions, and the drowsy god took possession of us at an early hour. The sun was just peeping above the live oak hamaks and low sand dunes beyond the marsh lands as I turned out the following morning, and I was much surprised to find a heavy coat of frost. The air was not cold, but had that crispiness about it that one experiences on a cool but clear April morning in the Northern States. There was no wind, and the waters were as smooth as possible. As I stood watching a saucy-looking lugger, as her dark-skinned Dago crew worked her against the current with long sweeps, a flock of ducks pitched down between the rows of barracks with a velocity and whistling that startled me.

When we were about to eat our breakfast we received a hearty "Good morning, gentlemen," and in

walked the representative of "Uncle Sam," bearing in his hands a server covered with a snow-white napkin. "Gentlemen, it was so dark when you arrived last night that I couldn't see your faces, and took you to be some fishermen. Had I known who you were I might have given you quarters a trifle more comfortable. My wife has sent you some breakfast, which she hopes will be to your liking. When you get ready, I will be pleased to see you at my quarters in the fort." Passing over a short stretch of marsh that divided the fort from the barracks, we crossed the drawbridge spanning the moat, and entering through the sallyport, found ourselves in the center of the fortification on the neatly-kept gravel parade. Here we were joined by the sergeant, who conducted us through the neatly whitewashed underground works, where he exhibited some very ancient gun-carriages and artillery equipments which formed part of the first armament of this rather ancient work. On reaching the highest point of the works we had a fine view of our course for several miles to the south and eastward, and were able to locate several points of value to us while traversing the devious thoroughfares between us and the open Gulf. Looking down from the parapet to the broad moat beneath, my attention was attracted to a peculiar log lying partly submerged in the slimy water. My surprise may be fancied when the sergeant, tossing a piece of brick on it, the log moved slowly off to a more secluded spot, where he might lie in saurian ease and bask in the sun unmolested. Having made the tour

of the works, we were introduced into the quarters of the commandant, where before a blazing fire on the hearth we smoked the "pipe of peace" and drank to the health of our entertainer in a bumper of native wine. On looking about these comfortable quarters my eye rested on a small telegraphic instrument on a stand beneath one of the windows. The sergeant has a son of about the same age as the eldest boy at the lighthouse, and for amusement and mutual improvement they have constructed a line connecting the two localities. On this instrument stand I made a discovery—there lay a copy of the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, which I knew contained an account of our departure from that city. The contribution to our breakfast was undoubtedly the result of the sergeant's search after news, subsequent to his ungracious reception of us the evening before.

As the sun advanced toward the zenith it sent down its rays with more power than I had felt from it for many weeks, and it was in recognition of the rare treat that I stepped into my canoe with arms bared to the elbows, and said good-by to Sergeant Thomas Cooney, U. S. A. We were off just in time to catch the last of the flood tide, and the day was so fine that I had little inclination to work hard, add to which, it was Sunday and should be a day of rest.

About five miles below the fort, at the mouth of Pearl River, we found a small schooner fast on the bar that lies close to the mouth of the bayou. On "laying alongside," the only person on board informs me that he is the skipper, and has been aground since early

morning, having got fast in the darkness. "I done sent de boy wid de yal up to de village to git de boys to come down an' help me off. He done promised to come right straight back, but I reckon he done got long wid some ob dem wenches up dar an' de Lord only knows when he come back now." Barnacle, the ever-ready in an emergency, now speaks up and asks him why he does'n't do so and so, but the darky seems to have very little idea of the meaning of the nautical phrases that are made use of, and says, "I dunno what de gemman means." "Well, I'll show you," says Barnacle. "What do you say, Doctor, shall we get him off?" Of course, I am ready to lend a helping hand, and springing on board, Barnacle overhauls the lines that lie tangled on the deck, reeves them through blocks, and directing the skipper to bring his small boat around to the stern, we lower the anchor into it, and he pulls out to the end of the line and casts anchor. Now, we all take hold and haul away with all our might. She doesn't move, but instead, the anchor drags. Again it is taken out and cast in another place, and again we haul away, but all we get to move is the anchor. Barnacle now sends the negro down into the forward hold, and following him, they shift some of the freight a trifle further aft, and again we go through the operation of warping, and away she goes and is afloat before the messenger for help arrives. We assist the skipper in making sail, and soon have the gratification of seeing his craft go speeding up the river before a gentle breeze. His gratitude was so deep, that before we left him he

insisted on our accepting a couple of bottles of strained honey. The last I heard of him was: "Yah, yah, golly, I'll sprize dem fellas up dar, wen da see me comin' dey'll spect de debbil help me fo' sho."

Passing through a short bayou we made sail, and as the sun sank like a ball of gold behind the low sand dunes, we had reached the little settlement of English Lookout. The evening was delightfully passed in company with the custom house officer of the port.

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN WHICH OUR PROWS CUT THE WATERS OF THE GULF.

ALTHOUGH a strong wind was blowing from the southeast, we pushed out at eight o'clock the next morning, determined to overcome by noon the distance of seven miles that intervened between us and the open Gulf, but on arriving at the crossing of the N. O. and M. R. R. over the Pearl River, the sweep of the wind was so strong that we took the advice of the bridge-tender and struck into a narrow bayou that led to the east. Said he: "Follow the largest stream you can find; it will double back, and often you will find that you are coming back toward your starting point; but if you will follow it for about seven miles you will come to a live-oak hamak, the only high land between this and the Gulf. There you will find John Campbell, who can direct you to a smaller bayou, which will save you many miles of paddling." We are now compelled to carry water for drinking and culinary purposes, as the waters we are navigating, although not salt, are much too brackish for use. The tall marsh grasses grew to such a height that it completely shut off the wind

that kept their slender tops bent over with its force, but so great is our protection that the water of the bayou is not even ruffled. After having paddled until I am satisfied that we have made at least seven miles and must be near the hamak, I stand up in my canoe to get a view, if possible, of the surrounding country. From the directions of the bridge-keeper the hamak ought to be to the east of us, but as far as the eye can reach in that direction there is nothing but one unbroken prairie-like surface. I call to Barnacle that we must have taken the wrong thoroughfare somewhere, but I cannot convince him of that, and he gradually pushes his six feet something up above the floor of the *Comfort* and gazes about. "Well, I don't know where we are; there is a long line of trees away to the northward, but that must be the main'and—it is not a hamak. Oh, here is the one we are looking for." And turning so that I can see over the stern of my canoe, not more than a quarter of a mile distant I see a small sand hill, on which there is quite an extensive growth of live-oaks and pines, and beneath their shelter a frame whitewashed house. This is of course the goal we are looking for, where resides the only person in this great expanse of prairie and mystifying watercourses who can give us intelligible directions as to how we are to reach the open Gulf. The question that is plainly marked on our countenances is, Which way shall we go—ahead or back? Remembering the instructions of the bridge-keeper, we continue on the course we have been traveling, and in less than

twenty minutes we shoot around a sharp curve and come into view of the house. The Aurora has, besides the A. C. A. and L. G. C. C. flags at the fore, a small silk national flag flying on a staff aft. The voice of a man calling, "Johnny, Johnny, three cheers for the stars and stripes," is heard, and on looking over the tall grass I see a man and a small boy waving their hats as they give the "three cheers" called for. "Welcome, gents; welcome to the home of John Campbell, the Scotch-American." And catching the Aurora's painter he hauls her up to the footboard, and I receive a hearty hand shake from the patriotic Scotchman. In a few words I tell him the story of the cruise, and ask for the information as to the route to the Gulf. "I don't know anything about it down here, but if you will come up to the house I will try and find out for you." Here was a predicament; this man does not know the way. Can it be possible that we have been misinformed by the man at the bridge? But no, this is John Campbell, the man to whom he directed us, and who is said to be thoroughly familiar with the labyrinth of watery thoroughfares through this prairie region; and yet this man says he "don't know down here, but if we will go up to the house he will try and find out." Is it possible that we must return over the lonesome course we have come? While my mind has been filled with these thoughts we have been walking through the dry sand toward the house. Seated on the broad veranda in the warm sunshine, no object is visible save the white sails of a schooner far off

on the blue waters of the Gulf and the low white lighthouse on St. Joseph's Island to the southeast. Our host had left us, saying "he would summon his family," and presently I heard his deep-toned voice singing "The Campbells are coming, heigho, heigho," and he appeared heading a procession of four children, with a tall, buxom woman bringing up the rear. The latter he introduced as Mrs. Campbell and the eldest of the children as Johnny, the heir to the vast estate of John Campbell, Sr., consisting of seven acres of sand hill, which annually produced sufficient sweet potatoes to feed the family and two pigs and keep the one yoke of cattle through the winter. Verily, it must be a productive seven acres. Seated before a small stand, we were served with a glass of fine Scotch whisky, smelling strongly of the bog, while Johnny passed a tray of very good fruit cake.

In response to my suggestion to Mr. Campbell that he now tell us what he had learned of the course we were to steer in order to reach the coast, he proceeded to draw a series of very crooked lines on the sand-covered floor: "Now, here you are: this is a bayou going to the left; you'll no tak that. Here is another going to the right; you'll no tak that. Now here is one so narrow you'll be little like to see it, but you must; if you don't you'll find yourselves at dark about twenty miles from the mouth of the bayou. Push through this little cut-off for a matter of a mile, and you'll come out into Bayou Campbell with the current setting to the right as you go out. Now follow that until you come to a forks where

there is a small pine tree; take the left-hand bayou and it will lead you to the white sandy shores of the Gulf."

Good; perfectly clear. We must now be off, as the sun is sinking low in the west. John Campbell and his entire family escort us to the landing, and as we push off give three hearty cheers for the stars and stripes and the gentlemen from New York. Following his instructions to the letter, we bring the pine tree into view and trim off to the left, and in another half hour shoot out from between the grass-lined banks of the bayou on to the swelling, mirror-like surface of the Gulf of Mexico, at sundown of New Year's Day, 1883. Stopping at the mouth of the bayou only long enough to make a cup of coffee and fry a piece of bacon, we push on under paddle, making a run of two miles, when we land on a white sand beach and pitch the tent beneath some tall pines whose roots are bared by the waters of the Gulf, while all about there is a luxuriant growth of palmetto ferns. Although Barnacle seems to be relishing his supper, he is not in a communicative mood. My spirits are not depressed by this, however, as often a whole day and night will pass with scarcely a word passing his lips. But this is a night that ought to be celebrated with more than ordinary cheerfulness. I venture to question my silent companion as to the cause of his depression. Looking at me with an expression of astonishment on his dark features, he says, in an excited manner: "Why, where have your ears been since we came ashore—

don't you hear him? Hark! don't you hear him bellow?" "Hear him! bellowing! who's bellowing?" "Why, where in the name of heaven have your eyes been since we came ashore? The first thing I saw on landing were the tracks of a bull in the sand, and of course he is half wild. If there is any one thing that I am more afraid of than another it is a bull. Don't you hear him bellow now? He'll be on us to-night as sure as we are here, but I'll give him a noisy reception when he comes."

Now, had there been an alligator crawling about in the vicinity of the camp I might have been alarmed, but fear for my safety from the attack of a bull was far from my mind; and I rolled into my blankets, prepared for a comfortable night's rest, while the bright light from St. Joseph's Island, two miles distant to the south, shone in my face. "The Campbells are coming, heigho! heigho!" Hello, I have been dreaming of John Campbell and his clan, but I am broad awake now; and there is Barnacle, his blankets thrown aside and he resting on his elbow, while he grasps in his right hand the heavy navy revolver that is always his companion by night, and near him lies the heavy oaken oar.

"What's the matter, Barnacle?"

"Matter! Don't you hear that devil of a bull roar?"

"Yes, I do hear him now; but what of it? He won't molest us if we don't disturb him."

I never knew Barnacle to exhibit fear before to-night; he has always manifested the utmost courage

hitherto, but the demonstrations of this bull, who is probably seeking for some other bovine, seems to fill him with terror. While we are debating whether it would be safe to go out and attack him, with the hope of driving him off, his bellowing gradually dies away in the distance and we are left in peace.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE OUTSIDE GULF PASSAGE.

The morning of the 2d of January dawned bright and clear, with a gentle breeze blowing from off the rippling surface of the Gulf, while the waters washed musically along the glistening sands. Several small schooners were heading in toward the mouth of Pearl River, on their way to New Orleans via Lake Pontchartrain. Beyond these, almost hull down, I could see an ocean steamer, evidently heading for the passes of the Mississippi, en route to the great Southern port. At the conclusion of our breakfast we find that our stock of water is getting very low, and for fear of being overtaken by an off-shore gale and blown to sea, deem it best to lay in a full supply, if it can be found. I have often heard of the possibility of procuring fresh water, along the Atlantic coast, by digging in the sand a few feet back from the shore, and proceeded to try the experiment here on the Gulf. After having dug a hole four feet deep, a hundred feet back from the mark of high water, a stream flows into my well, but in clearing and tasting it I found it too brackish for use. This

want of water necessitates a landing at the nearest port. The village of Pass Christian lies on the high shore twelve miles to the east in a direct line of our location, and for this we decide to make as soon as possible. Before the gentle south wind we spread the sails and speed merrily on for about two miles, when it died out and left the surface of the Gulf almost like glass. A delightful contrast is this balmy atmosphere to that when, a few short weeks ago, we were battling with the ice and covered with the flying sand on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. As I look in shore I see the village of Bay St. Louis, lying just inside the deep bay. So warm is the sun that I strip to my shirt and a pair of thin trousers, while my feet are without covering save the sheltering of the ha'ches which shade them from the rays of the sun. The heat has an enervating effect on us who have come from higher latitudes, and we paddle toward the shore so quietly that the bows of the canoes scarcely grate in the sand which is ploughed up in little mounds on either side the stems. Here we made camp, pitching the tent on a thick carpet of pine needles, while all about us were the magnificent live-oak trees and the rich dark green magnolias. Insect life was present on all sides; the frisky grasshopper made his long leaps as he was disturbed in his nest among the needles, and beautiful butterflies flitted to and fro. As the morning had been well advanced before the launch was made and the distance traveled in rather an indolent manner, the sun had reached the zenith long before we reached shore.

Leaving Barnacle to build his fire, I took the water-jugs and went to a house close by, where I found a little girl most curious to know "where the little boats came from." My report of the extended trip was entirely beyond her comprehension, a knowledge of geography having been denied this child of fifteen summers. She said: "I have been to Ship Island and to New Orleans. Did you come from anywhere near New Orleans?" In the well-kept grounds I saw many beautiful roses in full bloom, and in all parts of the grounds were orange trees loaded with bright golden fruit. Spending a portion of the afternoon in letter writing and bringing my log up to date, the evening stole upon us almost unawares. No need of a huge fire now, large enough to warm all outdoors, but a small one, built immediately in front of the tent, served to dry the moist atmosphere that came from off the Gulf, while we lay in the yielding bed of pine needles, I, at least, allowing my thoughts to fly to my far distant home, at the gateway of the snow-clad and ice-bound Adirondacks, while the chirp of crickets about me and the musical "peep, peep" of the frogs' swamp back of the camp served as a soothing lullaby, and I dropped off to sleep with the light from Cat Island, eight miles distant to the southward, shining like a bright white star on the horizon.

With the dawn came a strong breeze from the east, which transformed the silver surface of the Gulf of the day before to one of a heaving, troubled appearance, and the waters washed upon the sands at our

feet with a swash so strong that the singing of the birds and insects was drowned. Out beyond Cat Island a large square-rigged vessel lay at anchor, her hull visible only when she was borne on the crest of some great sea. Barnacle does not care to make a start, fearing that the wind will increase to such a degree as to make it dangerous for us to reach the shore, should we find it necessary; but I am anxious to push on, and, with a good supply of water on board, we launch and head to the east. The shallow water is rolled up into short, choppy seas that send their spray over our decks, and now and then one a trifle more savage than the rest reaches far enough aft to wet the captain, but this is of small account, as the water is delightfully warm. We battled against the wind and seas for ten miles, passing Pass Christian, with its line of long piers running out to the Gulf through the shallow waters. At the end of each pier there was a bath-house, and the space beneath, from the surface of the water to the hard sand bottom, was inclosed with slats to protect the bathers from attack by the man-eating sharks that abound in these waters. Gradually the wind lulls, and the vicious seas that are rolling through the shallow water subside to mere rollers, making it possible for us to land and rest our weary arms. On a bright green sward, beneath a broad-reaching live-oak tree, we make our camp, where within fifty feet the little breakers chase one another along the sandy beach. To the southeast can be made out Ship Island, distant twelve miles, where ride at anchor

several foreign vessels, which are being loaded with pine timber cut from the semi-tropical forests of the Gulf coast and lightered to them in rafts. During the evening the rain comes gently down, pattering on the canvas roof, and before we have fallen off to sleep the wind rises from the northeast, and but for the protection of the forest of trees back of us we would have had the tent blown from over our heads. Out on the Gulf we can hear the dashing waves as they roll over one another, their foam crests illuminated with phosphorescent bands and star-like flashes. When we wake up in the morning the rain has ceased and a heavy, driving fog envelops us, while all about is dark, dreary and disagreeable. I hear the deep note of a conch shell far off to the south in the thick fog. A moment more and it is answered by one from the shore, a short distance to the west of us. Nearer the answering horn comes, and we can see the form of a woman walking along the bank blowing the shell she has in her hand. Her husband and son are in that fishing-boat from whence comes the deep notes of the conch. They are lost in the fog and are without a compass. Stopping to chat with us (blowing the horn at intervals): "Oh, the fishermen often get lost in the fog at this season of the year, but they generally get safe to the shore, if a wind off the land doesn't rise and blow them off to sea. Sometimes that happens; and then, if they haven't got enough water and provisions on board, they suffer some, but generally manage to get to the mainland or make one of the islands. Sometimes

they are gone several days before we hear from them, and several boats have never been heard from. I have been up all night watching for my man and boy, and only half an hour ago heard their horn." Leaving us, she stepped quickly along the beach some yards to the east, where there is a suitable landing for a boat. Other people now come, anxiety for the safety of husbands, brothers or lovers plainly marked on their countenances. They all know of the off-shore gale last night. Slowly the boat approaches the shore, and as she emerges from the fog inquiries are made of her crew for some word of the absent ones. All they can learn is that the various boats were in the vicinity of Ship Island, and as they saw nothing of them afterward, believe they are safely moored and will come in when the fog lifts. "We were half way to the land and steering for the light here when the gale struck us, and managed to beat about until it went down as suddenly as it came up, and then the fog shut down," said her skipper.

By ten o'clock, the fog not having lifted, we packed up and launched. Barnacle, who is to be the navigator, sets a boat's compass on the floor beneath his eye, and we lay a course for the end of the long pier that stretches a mile out into the water in front of Mississippi City. After having paddled some time, I begin to have my doubts as to the correctness of the course we are steering, and this feeling of doubt increases when I notice that Barnacle seems to be constantly changing his course. We should be running parallel with the shore to strike the pier,

and ought now to be close to it, as it was but three miles from our starting point.

"Barnacle, do you think that compass of yours is thoroughly reliable?" I ask.

"Well, it ought to be; I know of no reason why it should not. But the canoe moves so much quicker than the card does that I find it hard work to keep on the course. Why do you ask?"

"Well, I am quite satisfied that we are not on the right course, or we would have been up with the pier before now. Hark! there goes a train on the railroad;" and I turned my canoe bow to the sound of the locomotive's whistle. We had been steering away from the land, and in a short time would have been within the strength of the current, which might have drifted us so far to the southward of the chain of islands that with an off-shore gale it would have been next to impossible to make the mainland or one of the islands.

"Well, I guess we had better make our way in toward the land and feel our way by the bottom, and not trust to this compass," said Barnacle.

Having paddled about half an hour, we found the water shoaling fast, and as there are no bars hereabouts, we knew it must be near the land. All at once a dark object looms up out of the fog, and I make out what appears to be a man on stilts walking on the water, but on nearer approach it proves to be a man standing on the deck of a small catboat while he works a pair of long-handled oyster-tongs. Silently we dip the paddles, making no noise that

would attract attention until we are within a boat's length of the oysterman, when he looks up and wants to know if we "have come across the Western Ocean in these cockle shells." "Have some oysters?" and another man emerges from the bottom of the boat and opens for us some of those great fat bivalves for which this portion of the coast is celebrated. "You'd better keep within soundings," said he, "for the wind is likely to come off the land and blow hard, and if you were far out you might have a hard pull of it to get back." With the after deck of each canoe piled high with oysters, we are off into the gloom, cautiously watching the bottom that we may not again lose our course and go seaward. Edging a little closer in shore with each dip of the paddle, we come in sight of the skeleton-like piers of Mississippi City. A mile beyond the town the fog lifts for a moment and we make out a grove of trees.

There we pitch the tent and determine to wait until the fog lifts. Night shuts down at an early hour, and shortly after we turn in, while the frogs in the low lands keep up a serenade and a train of cars goes thundering along in close proximity to our camp. For three days we remained fog-bound. On the afternoon of January 6 the fog cleared up, and we launched and pushed for Biloxi, one of the prominent seaside resorts of the South. With but a few short stretches, the entire coast between Pass Christian and Biloxi is built up with the neat summer residences of New Orleans and Mobile business men, each having in front of it a long pier, with

boat and bath houses. Having paddled about four miles, the wind suddenly shifted and came out from the south, while the sun in the splendor of its setting gilded the edges of a bank of dark, ominous-looking clouds that seemed at once to hang over the horizon and to roll up rapidly with the increase of the wind, foretelling the advent of a storm. But a harbor of refuge was at hand, and as the light shone brilliantly from the tall white tower of the lighthouse at the western end of Biloxi, the bows of the canoes ploughed into the white sands of the beach beneath its rays. In the comfortable quarters of the lightkeeper we found hospitality, but the duration of the storm was short, and as we pitched the tent on the pure sands, the myriads of stars shot their rays from the vault above and were reflected from the now tranquil waters of the Gulf. At Biloxi we remained three days, very pleasantly entertained by Mr. P. J. Montross and Major W. T. Walthall. Mr. R. B. Clemmens showed us much kind attention and cared for the canoes. During the night of the 8th of January the wind shifted and brought a "norther" down to us, which howled and moaned dismally about the many gables of the hotel. With the daylight came the sight of the first snow that many of the inhabitants had seen for years. It was amusing to watch the young darkies as they capered about it in their bare feet, now and then rubbing them and exclaiming, "It burns." A bright sun, although accompanied by a cold wind, soon melted the fleecy coat, and ere our breakfast was over it had

entirely disappeared. At noon of the 10th of January we made sail and sped merrily eastward before a fresh westerly breeze which carried us eighteen miles to Graviline Bayou before four o'clock. It had been our intention to run two or three miles up this bayou in order to enjoy the shooting and fishing, to say nothing of the delicious oysters that the bayou is celebrated for; but owing to the low water, we found it so difficult to follow the channel that the attempt was abandoned and we squared away for a tree-covered point about two miles distant.

The water is very shallow for a quarter of a mile from the shore, and the sand is kept in solution so that it is impossible to see the bottom, and we were constantly grounding, and many times were forced to jump overboard to lighter into deeper water. After much hard work we came abreast of the point, but found that the low beach ran out for a quarter of a mile. Nevertheless here we must make our camp, as night is settling down upon us. Hauling the craft well up on the sand and securely anchoring them, we carry to the shore such articles as are necessary for our comfort. Not wishing to unjoint the spars and stow them under the decks, they, too, are toted ashore, together with the paddles. The site chosen for our camp is on a heavily-wooded low bank thickly grown with tall grass and bunches of the fan palm. The temperature is so mild, and there is such an abundance of wood at hand we do not pitch the tent, but making a bed in the soft sand, lie with our feet to the fire.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN WHICH IT IS SHOWN THAT THE GREATEST PERIL
OF CANOEING IS FIRE ON DRY LAND.

IN the night a crackling sound disturbs me, and my eyes are greeted with a sight that for an instant is appalling. All about me is one mass of crackling roaring, hissing flames, leaping from one bunch of dry grass and palmetto to another, while they dart high into the air from the broad branches of the old tree against which our paddles and sails are leaning. Now thoroughly enveloped by fire, I spring from my blankets, crying, "Fire! fire! Barnacle, wake up, the camp is on fire!" and dashing into the flames, seize the sails and paddles and throw them, a mass of flames, on to the sand, and then spring for the mess chests, which follow the sails and paddles. Barnacle is now on hand, and we heap the wet sand on the flames, and soon there is left only a smoking heap of pine sticks and cotton duck. We next direct our attention to preventing the spread of the fire further into the timber, and what with beating with sticks and throwing wet sand, we have it under control in a few minutes.

"Well, Barnacle, this is the result of your propensity for building big camp-fires. You burned up an island on the Ohio River, and now what do you think of this?"

"Think of it? Why, I think the camp has been on fire, but it wasn't my fault; it is all owing to a shift of the wind that blew the flames from the fire into the dry grass and fan palms, and they communicated it to that old tree. I tell you, Doctor, it was a lucky thing those blessed canoes were not at the foot of that old tree, or we would have been compelled to abandon the cruise here near the mouth of the Pascagoula River."

It is two o'clock and the night pitch dark. No time now to make an inventory of the damages. So, filling the pipes and renewing the camp-fire, we sit about it and have a soothing smoke, and then turn in for a nap preparatory to the fatigues of a day in which we must repair damages. A bright morning greets us after a night of excitement, and we examine into the results of our fiery experience. With a sad heart I take up the remnants of the Aurora's snow-white, beautifully-setting sail, and unfurling it, find that only a half of it remains, and at least one-half of that will need to be cut away in order that it may be properly patched. The spars are not so badly damaged as to be beyond use, the sail having been wrapped so closely about them that they have been protected until the layers of cloth first burned through. There lay the paddles, one-half of each burned so thin that on lifting them they drop to

pieces. That trusty paddle that had been my main dependence for so many weeks, over so many hundreds of weary miles, half of it lay before me a little heap of charred coals, while the remaining portion is useless without the other.

"Doctor," says Barnacle, "I would rather have had all my clothes, together with my entire outfit, destroyed, than to have lost that sail and paddle. I am worse off than you, as my spars are burned past use. I may be able to splice them, but it will be a difficult job, even if I can find material to do it with."

There is a house near by, and while Barnacle is preparing breakfast I take the water-jugs and go to it, with the hope of finding a piece of timber from which we might whittle substitutes for the burned paddles and spars. We can cut up the tent and convert that into sails. On leaving Biloxi, Maj. Walthall had handed me a note of introduction to an old friend of his, saying: "I don't know just where Mr. Lewis lives, but it is about two miles to the eastward of Bayou Graviline. Should you be in his neighborhood, he would be pleased to receive a call from you." Two miles east of Bayou Graviline is just about where we are now. It was with some hesitation that I approached the great, substantial home-like plantation house before me, as in my present costume I looked more like a tramp than the skipper of the natty little Aurora. On reaching the gate at the end of the broad walk to the front of the house I saw over the door in a semicircle of large letters of evergreen the one word "Welcome." Passing to the

rear of the house I met a tall gentleman with long, white hair and snowy beard, who was none other than Mr. Lewis himself. He kindly listened to my tale of woe, and promised to assist me in any way in his power. On returning to the camp, after having vainly searched for material with which to make repairs, I found that Barnacle had breakfast ready. The "Colonel" had told me of a sawmill, distant about three miles, on the banks of the Pascagoula River. He thought we might be able to find what we wanted there. So I started Barnacle off with the unburned half of my paddle as a sample of what we needed in the way of timber. On looking through my dunnage I came across a piece of cotton cloth, which, by piecing, I could get enough out of to patch my sail, and a cotton cloth awning that was stowed away in the bow of the Aurora would answer for repairs to the Comfort's sail; so on the score of sails we were all right. I spent most of the day cutting and fitting the new pieces for the sail. As I sat beneath the wide-spreading branches of an oak, with my sewing on my knee, I received a visit from an old colored aunty, who was much amused at seeing me stitching, and made the remark that "de Yankees can do mos' anything when de time comes 'long."

After asking various questions, she finally came to the subject of her errand: "Massa, duz ye got a little bacca for dis chile? I dun use de lass I had. My ole man dun gone to de stoah to fetch some, but he dun stay so long. I libs jess ober heah in de little cabin, and I'll pay ye back when d' ole man fetch

some." "Tis true I have some tobacco, but the supply is so very limited I do not care to part with even a small portion of it. It is of a fine brand, and I may not be able to replenish my stock this side of Pensacola. Oh, a happy thought strikes me; and going to the canoe, I search out the paper containing the roll of knock-down drag-out leaf that our Kentucky friend had given us, and handing the roll to the aged crone, I save my choice brand and get rid of two nuisances in one act. It is now so near mid-day that I begin to feel the want of dinner, and scraping away the bed of coals, I dig a hole in the hot sand and fill it with fine, large sweet potatoes, and then cover them with the sand. I then open a couple of dozen fine oysters, and rolling them in crushed cracker, drop them into the frying-pan, which contains just enough butter. In a few moments I have before me a dinner fit for a king. While the birds sweetly carol in the branches above me, I recline against a tree and enjoy my pipe and coffee. The day passes quickly, so busy am I on my sail repairs, and night is on me before I am prepared for it. Barnacle puts in an appearance with a piece of timber for the paddles, which has been riven out of a cypress log.

Three days of sunshine, alternating with thunderstorms, are spent in getting ready for sea, but when all is finished a heavy fog sets in and precludes the possibility of making a safe run to the East Pasagoula lighthouse, distant about four miles. Our whereabouts has now become known to the few

negroes living in the vicinity, and we frequently receive visits from them. On Sunday evening a party of four girls and two boys called and spent most of the delightfully warm evening, entertaining us with their quaint speeches and plantation melodies. The following morning I caught a glimpse of my tobacco-begging visitor of a few days ago as she made her way toward the camp, and surmising that she might be on the same errand as before, I was prepared, and met her with, "Good morning, aunty; have you got any tobacco?" "Why, bress yer soul, honey, I was jes gwine ter ask yer that same question."

CHAPTER XXXII.

FROM PASCAGOULA TO POINT OF PINES.

ON the 18th of January we left the camp of fiery incident and paddled to the little settlement of East Pascagoula, where we remained only long enough to give directions about our mail, and then laid a course for Point of Pines. One of two ways was open to us, either a passage well out in the Gulf, or a narrow, tortuous bayou into Grand Bay, across which lay our point of destination. Owing to the heavy seas outside, we concluded to take the smoother but more mystifying inside passage. We were not a little influenced in this decision by the fact that we had been told we could find abundance of oysters at the mouth of the bayou.

"Well, Barnacle," said I, after we had gone some distance, "this must be the passage; there is the heap of oyster shells that were to be left on the port hand, and over there are the dead pine trees that were to be on the same hand. We were to turn to the right when within about a quarter of a mile of them. Now we had better take this narrow thoroughfare, hadn't we?"

"Blest if I know; there are so many ditches that I am completely mystified."

"Well, suppose we try this one, at any rate;" and in we go. "I say, Barnacle, have you got enough water over there? On this side I have less than six inches."

"Water? No, I am paddling in the soft, oozy mud. Guess we had better back out of here the same way we came in, or we may have to remain where we are all night." And back we go, not, however, without much difficulty and hard work, as we were compelled to paddle backward, there not being enough water to allow of our turning the canoes.

We start in on a new ditch. "Now we have the right one, Doctor," says Barnacle; "there is plenty of water here." But as I have my doubts as to its being the "right one," I wait to see how Barnacle gets along, and am soon reviling him as he again gets stuck in the mud. There is a third thoroughfare in sight, and into this I push the Aurora's bow through some tall, overhanging grass that lines the edges. Pushing my paddle down, I fail to reach the bottom, and therefore believe I am on the proper course to Grand Bay, and calling to Barnacle that I have found the road, he comes in after me, and together we paddle on for perhaps a mile, when we enter a broad lakelet, from which there is no outlet save that by which we entered. There is nothing left for us but to return to the main bayou and again try one of the thoroughfares that we had abandoned.

After a brief consultation we concluded that we took the right course in the first place, and into it we again push until we are fast stuck in the mud. I had noticed, while on the Allegheny, that whenever we got stuck, Barnacle invariably lighted his pipe and sucked consolation out of it. One thing is certain—we are stuck in the mud so fast that we can neither advance nor retreat, so we must remain where we are until the tide rises. Why not follow Barnacle's example, and have a smoke? As the half-burned match rests on the water that is not more than three inches deep, I see with joy that it drifts toward the bow of the canoe. "Barnacle, I believe the tide is rising, and before we have smoked out one pipe we will have water enough to float us." My assertion is soon verified, and away we go through the half water, half mud bayou until we come out on to the broad surface of Grand Bay, across which, outlined against the evening sky, are the tall trees on Point of Pines, the only spot for miles where one may set foot on solid ground. It is now clear sailing, and the short distance of two miles is soon crossed, and the tired voyagers are at their evening meal, which has been well earned.

So close do the trees grow to the water's edge that a number of them, which have been toppled over by the washing of the soil from about their roots, are lying with their branches in the water, and from them we gather a quantity of fine oysters, thus setting at rest, to my mind at least, the question, "Do oysters grow on trees?"

The coast was here an almost unbroken wilderness, with no habitation for many miles. Fifteen miles to the southeast, on the broad Gulf, lay Dauphin Island, and this we must reach before we can cross the broad entrance to Mobile Bay.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IN WHICH BARNACLE FINDS DEEP WATER.

THE morning succeeding our arrival at Point of Pines was one of almost tropical heat, and as we waded out of the mouth of the bay and hauled the canoes across the bar, Barnacle spied a school of porpoises fishing in the shoal waters, and a moment after was giving them chase, with revolver and shotgun lying cocked by his side. Not having a fondness for such sport, I lay, idly drifting with the current, convulsed with laughter at his ineffectual attempts to get a shot. There comes one of the black hogs now, his back exposed above the surface for a moment, and then disappears. Now Barnacle is going for him. See him paddle! every stroke causes his canoe to jump as though some submarine animal had it in tow. But he is too late. Just as he arrives at the spot where he thought he had him, the porpoise rises to the surface and blows, three hundred yards distant. For half an hour Barnacle vainly endeavors to get a snap shot, and then gives up the chase in disgust, and says "he wouldn't shoot one of them if he could."

The whole surface of the Gulf, so far as we can see, is as smooth as a millpond on a quiet summer's day. Barnacle is in a particularly happy frame of mind on this brilliantly beautiful morning, and gives vent to his feelings by singing several sailor "shanties" as we paddle still to the eastward. No sail is in sight on the bosom of the sea, but far in the distance we can just make out a dark object, which I believe to be a steamer, but which Barnacle thinks is simply a blind erected by duck-shooters. A nearer approach reveals a small steamer lying at anchor. As we come within hailing distance we receive an invitation to come on board, and five minutes later we are on the deck of the propeller *Twilight*, of Mobile, Captain Barnes, master. The captain informs us that in a few minutes he will start for Dauphin Island, and learning that the distant island is our destination, kindly invites us to remain on board, at the same time directing one of his men to secure the canoes with extra lines, by which they were dropped far astern, beyond the swell occasioned by the steamer's propeller. The trip was a very pleasant one, the rapid motion of the steamer creating a breeze that was delightful, while we sat on the deck beneath the shade of an awning. The steamer was bound for a raft of logs that had drifted on the sandy shores of the island and been collected by the wreckers who live there. As we neared the shore a bank of fog came driving in from seaward, and in less time than it takes to write it we were so completely enveloped by it that I would not have known

the whereabous of the island had it not been for the roar of the surf as it beat on the opposite shore. At the earnest solicitation of Captain Barnes we remained on board all night, he insisting on my occupying his berth while he lay on the cabin floor. With the arrival of daylight there was no change in the fog, but by the time we had finished breakfast it had thinned a trifle and we could make out the shore line. Taking the course from the chart, we once more committed ourselves to the guidance of the boat compass.

As we paddled along the northern shore of the island flocks of ducks got up in front of us, and Barnacle drops a brace of fine fat ones, which we lay on deck, with the promise that they shall be made into a stew for our dinner. Some stirring scenes have been enacted on this low, sandy island.*

The tall spars of a schooner riding at her anchor

* "Here Iberville and his comrades first planted the lilies of the flag of Louis le Grand, more than one hundred and eighty years ago. Some of these adventurers here found a mound, and on digging into it disclosed a huge heap of human bones, which called forth the exclamation, 'Oh, quel massacre,' and the name 'Isle de Massacre' was given to this sand heap. A few years later a permanent settlement was made, and the name of one of the Bourbon Princes was given to it, and to this day it is known as Isle Dauphin. It was here that Cadillac established his court of chivalry and published edicts prescribing dress and who should and who should not wear swords. Dauphin Island has been the scene of attack by Spaniards when it was in French possession, and by the English when it belonged to Spain, and by the British since it has been held by the United States. Many bloody deeds have been enacted by the islanders, noteworthy that of one Beasley, who murdered and plundered the islanders. He was a desperado of the most hardened stamp. Having murdered a man in the presence of his wife and children, he was captured by the officers of a revenue cutter, taken to Mobile, tried and hanged."

rise out of the fog, and as we approach her we give a hail, but all is still as death. Now we hear the crowing of a cock, off to the starboard, and this, if nothing else, proves that we are near the shore. According to the chart, we should now be near the eastern shore of a shallow bay, and not far from the house of one Doctor Jack Collins, physician, fisherman and wrecker. I begin to have renewed doubts as to the trustworthiness of Barnacle's compass, when the fog lifts and clears away almost as suddenly as it shut down on us, revealing the tree-covered shore close on our starboard hand, while directly ahead, not more than one hundred yards distant, is the beach of Little Dauphin Island, on which is perched the dilapidated whitewashed house of the Doctor, who receives us kindly, having been apprised of our coming through an article in one of the Mobile papers. After a hearty dinner with the Doctor, we leave our ducks in the hands of Mrs. Collins and push on toward Fort Gaines, which we can see in the distance. In order to reach the fort we must pass through a very narrow and shallow channel, known as Pass Drury. Barnacle keeps to the starboard in approaching it, believing there is a greater depth of water on that side; but I, with my usual perverseness, take the port route, and in a few moments have dashed through the little tumbling surf at the mouth of the pass and am on the swelling bosom of Mobile Bay. But Barnacle doesn't come in sight. What can be the matter? I paddle back a short distance until I can get a sight through the nar-

row pass. Oh, there he is, tracking his canoe over the bar that I fortunately avoided. "Hi, Barnacle! go a little further to the left, and you will find more water," I shouted. He found my words to be true; and as he emerged, spluttering, from the deep water, I truthfully tell him that I did not know of that deep hole being there.

Between Dauphin Island and the main shore opposite there is an open ocean inlet of three and one-half miles in width, through which the tide ebbs and flows with great velocity, and when the wind blows against these tides a very nasty and dangerous sea is the consequence. A gentleman at Biloxi had advised me to cross from Fort Gaines to Mobile Point whenever the water was smooth enough, be it day or night. Having made a hurried inspection of the fort and the rotten, tumble-down building of the U. S. A. Engineer Corps, I decided, as the waters of the inlet were tranquil, to start at once for the opposite shore, notwithstanding the fact that Barnacle seemed reluctant to leave the hospitality of Mr. Robt. Cruse, who is the guardian of the Engineer Corps barracks. As we pushed from the shore, directly ahead of us was the "mariner's guide" shining out from the lofty tower on Mobile Point, and for it we steadily paddled, now borne on high and anon carried into the depths of troughs of the smooth seas which roll in from the broad Atlantic. Landing on the barren sandy beach, beneath the light tower, I asked permission at the keeper's quarters to sleep on the floor of a small woodhouse adjoining, that we

might not be forced to unload the canoes and that we might make an early start in the morning; but this was refused, and wearily we betook ourselves back to the bleak beach, and gathering a mass of wreckage that had been thrown up by the sea, we had a fire such as I'll guarantee had not been seen here for many a day. "Build it big," said Barnacle, "and see if we cannot warm the hearts of those people in the lighthouse."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IN WHICH A MULLET DROPS FROM THE SKY.

AFTER a most comfortable night passed beneath the shadow of the walls of Fort Morgan, and while we were busy preparing our breakfast, we received a call from Doctor George Fowler, Quarantine Officer, and the telegraph operator. The Doctor very kindly invited us to his quarters, but as the day promised to be fine, we declined the invitation with regrets, and at nine o'clock launched and paddled south for a distance of two miles, in order to round a sand bar on which the surf broke in white foam; and as we rise and fall on the seas, which now have full sweep from the broad ocean, a school of porpoises put in an appearance, and apparently take full charge of our craft. Ahead of the Aurora, about three hundred feet, two of them rise and blow alternately, while on either side of me, not more than fifty feet distant, are other pairs. These black monsters, with their huge dorsal fins cutting the waters, act as our convoys until we are well to the eastward of the point, and then they leave us as quietly as they came.

For a distance of thirty miles, from Mobile Point to

the mouth of Perdido River, the coast is one unbroken wilderness, without a harbor on the entire stretch of desolate sand. So long as the wind does not get up strong from off the sea, it would not be a difficult operation to run the canoes ashore through the surf; but in the event of a strong wind and heavy sea from east to southwest, it would be an extremely dangerous and hazardous undertaking, and this was brought forcibly to our minds after we have paddled a distance (as measured on the Coast Survey chart) of thirteen miles, when the wind came out from the southeast, and in a few moments so increased as to become alarming, while the surf beat on the sands with the noise of thunder. As we were borne aloft on the huge seas we could see the long line of breaking surf as it ran along the beach, distributing spume as it went. Barnacle now hails me: "Doctor, if we expect to get ashore with whole boats, we'd better be about it, for if this wind continues to blow in this way for half an hour longer, it will send in such a surf that it will be impossible for us to beach, and we cannot hold out much longer against it with the paddle." As we cannot possibly reach the distant harbor through the heavy sea, I call out, "All right; if we have to choose between drowning and having the canoes smashed, I say smash the canoes." We must use all our skill that the canoes may not broach to and roll over. If they do, all is lost, and we may then serve as sweet morsels for the man-eating sharks. Barnacle is ready before I am, and starts on his journey shoreward. As he is borne on

the bleak mountain of water which he has chosen to go in on, I get a full view of him, but an instant later he is lost to my sight, as I am dropped into the trough between two immense seas. As I am borne aloft again I catch a glimpse—no more—of the stern of his canoe pointing heavenward as she goes down the steep incline of the sea. An instant more, and I am again surrounded by walls of water. Again I am borne toward the gathering clouds, when I am greeted with a sight of Barnacle standing on the beach, victorious over the perils that are before me. The moment for me to start in has arrived, and I am caught by the rolling mountain of water, while I ply my paddle with all the vigor of my strong arms. Ahead of me the seas are breaking over one another and lashing themselves into a white, foaming fury. On, on I go, now with the velocity of the wind; and as the bow of my bonny craft pitches down, I brace myself for the final plunge, much as one would do on a plunging horse. An instant later I feel her keel grate on the sand, when overboard I go and seize her by the bow, while I dig my toes into the hard sand in order to resist the strength of the receding surf, and before Barnacle can reach me have the idol of my heart drawn well up on the beach, beyond the reach of Neptune's dark horses, now shaking their snowy manes with greater rage as the wind increases in fury.

With the canoes safely placed at the base of the range of high sand hills which for centuries have been builded and rebuilded by the action of storm

and wave, I ascended to the summit of one of the sand dunes and discovered at its opposite base a most picturesque miniature forest of pin-oak trees little more than bushes in height, beneath which is a thick mat of gray moss. What better site could one want for a camp? While I am off along the beach in search of such wreckage as can be used for firewood, Barnacle pitches the tent, and together we hustle the dunnage beneath the shelter, and are prepared for the storm which is still rolling up, with savage crashes of thunder, while the great seas are pounding on the beach with a roar that is so deafening as to cause us to shout our conversation into one another's ears. Notwithstanding the storm comes up in its awful majesty, we have time to prepare a simple meal, which we enjoy as the skirmishing raindrops come pattering down through the thick canopy of green leaves and drop noiselessly on the elastic moss beneath. With a crash as though a hundred cannon had burst simultaneously the storm is upon us, with a deluge of rain, driven by a fierce wind which howls through the semi-tropical forest and then bounds to the sea, to mingle its fury with the wild, lashing waters which are illuminated by the almost incessant flashes of forked lightning. For hours its fury is unabated, and while at its height I protect myself with oilskins and go to the top of the sand dune, and from there witness a scene that is grand beyond description. Night has come on, and we can see nothing a few yards distant, save when the flashes of quivering lightning give momentary illumination to

boiling, foam-crested mountains of water. During the seconds of light I catch a glimpse of a vessel far off on the heaving waters, from whose white sails the flashes of electricity are reflected as she bounds majestically through the phosphorescent sea.

As the weary, smoke-begrimed soldier falls asleep on the field of battle, amid the roar of artillery and crashes of musketry, we yield to nature's demands, and fall asleep while yet the storm rages and the ever restless sea beats on the shore. The wild night was followed by a morning of perfect brilliancy, but old ocean still rolled in and beat with unrelenting force, precluding the possibility of our launching. The day proved to be one of uncomfortable closeness until three o'clock, when another electric storm arose, and the rain descended as only in warm climates. We had run short of water, so this rain was a blessing. We had erected an awning over our fire to protect it from being drowned out, and beneath this, where the water ran off, we placed our tins and water-jugs, which in a few moments were filled with a supply of the finest water, sufficient to last us two or three days.

The following morning, although a fog came rolling across the land from Bonsecours Bay, we launched through the surf, which had now become little more than a ripple, and keeping close in shore, found we could proceed to the eastward without risk of being drawn to sea by the off-shore current. When we had made eight miles the wind hauled out of the north into the southwest, and soon the sea was

tossing our craft about as if they had been corks. Now for a rest from the weariness of paddling, and I prepare to make sail, when I am hailed by Barnacle—always astern—who says he has left his mast at Pascagoula. Cruel fate! I cannot go on and leave the Comfort, therefore I must submit to the inevitable and again resume the paddle. The day proves to be a wearisome one. Although the seas roll and carry us on high and then into the depths, there is no heavy break, and our decks are scarcely wet save by a little flying spray. All about us there is a flock of pelicans, now skimming the surface of the blue waters, now taking their awkward flight skyward, and as their keen eye detects the whereabouts of a fish, they make their ungainly descent, striking the water "all of a heap." One, after rising from the water with pouch distended, flew directly over us, when a well-directed shot brought him, wounded, to the water. Paddling quickly up to him, I dealt him a blow on the head with my mast, and put him out of pain. The body being too large for me to care for, I cut the head off below the junction of the pouch with the neck. As I did so, I discovered that the pouch contained a living fish, and pulled out a mullet of twelve inches in length, which Barnacle took possession of and served for supper. During the evening I prepared the head of the pelican, and as I write it adorns the bookcase in my den.

Again, as the sun sinks into the west, we prepare for a trip through the surf. It is mere child's

play now compared with the last beaching process, and we go in together and land on the smooth sands without so much as getting a drop of water aboard. The day has been an exhausting one, and we seek our beds in the soft sand at an early hour, and pass the night in alternate snoring and growling.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN WHICH THE AURORA AND THE COMFORT DIP
BELOW THE HORIZON.

DAYLIGHT discovered old ocean as smooth as a millpond, and as it is but ten miles to the mouth of the Perdido River, where we can gain the shelter of Bayou de John and be safe from the dangers of the outside passage, we hurriedly stow the canoes, and with a push are launched on the briny deep for the last time on this cruise. Up from the southeast, at the rising of the sun, came a gentle breeze which, as the morning advanced, increased in force until quite a respectable sea was kicked up, rolling in white foam over the bar at the entrance to our haven of safety, which we can now distinctly see ahead of us. There are two ways to reach the broad entrance to Pensacola Bay, either to continue on our course fifteen miles, keeping a couple of miles off shore to avoid the break of the sea, or to cross the bar at the mouth of the Perdido and gain the smooth waters of the bayou, and by crossing the latter reach a portage of three-quarters of a mile into Big Lagoon, whence is an uninterrupted route to the ancient city of Pen-

sacola. The fear of becoming exhausted after the long paddle we have already had, should a stronger wind and a heavier sea come on, decides us to attempt the passage over the bar. Again we watch for the big sea, and with its approach start toward the land, each man acting as his own pilot; and after a brief time, during which the angry waters hiss and foam about the devoted craft, threatening to submerge her and drown her skipper, we float tranquilly on the dark waters of the stream that divides the States of Alabama and Florida. Ere the bright sun has reached the meridian we have left astern of us the roar of the surf and the dark waters which flow from the cypress swamps of the interior, and pass into the Bayou de John, on the eastern shores of which is the commencement of the portage. We walk across the neck of low, sandy, dwarf-pine-covered land and pick out our trail. Transporting the heaviest articles of our dunnage to a point half way across, we build our camp and prepare supper, to which we do hearty justice, as we have eaten nothing since very early morning.

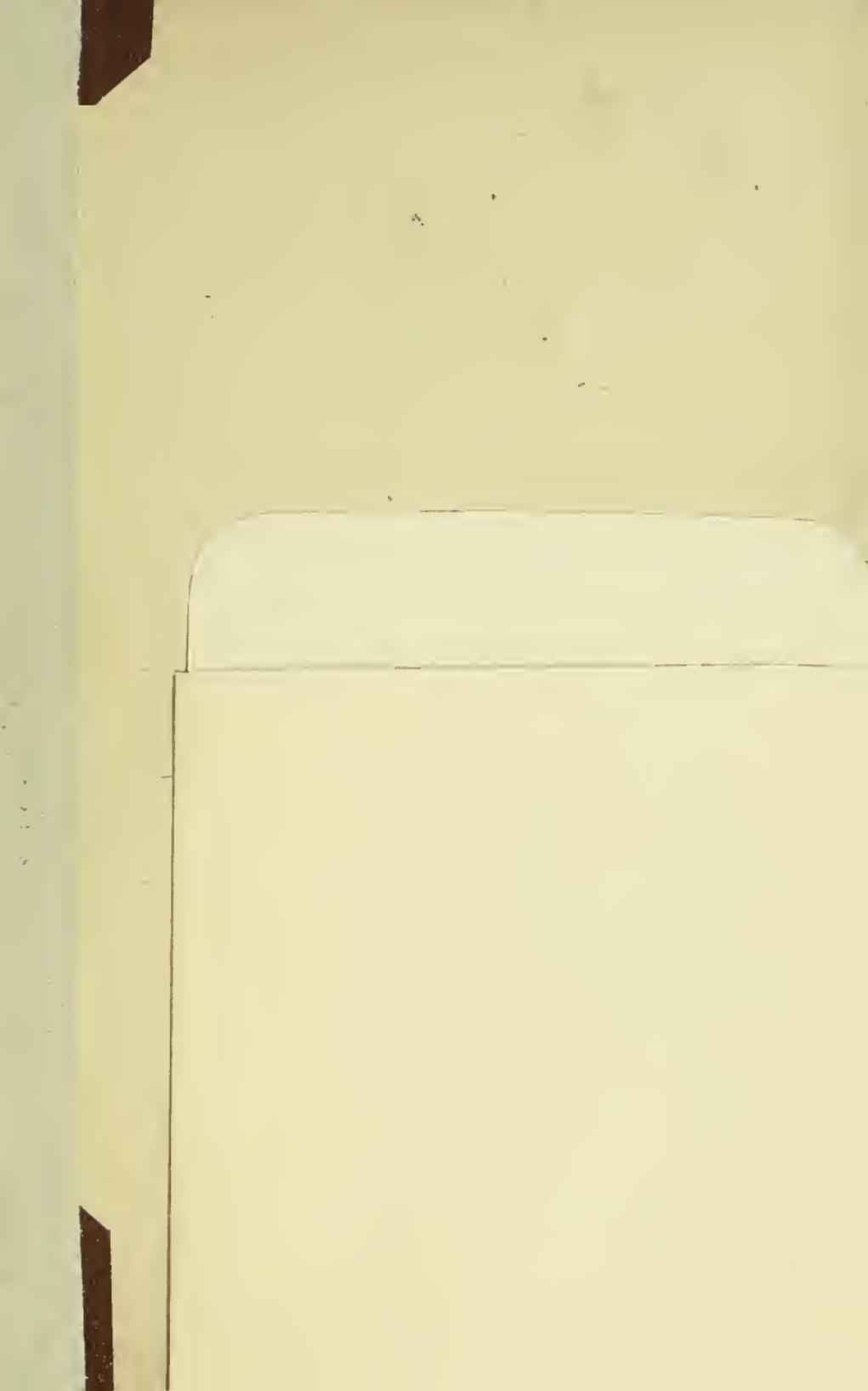
The meal over, we go back to the canoes, and I haul out from the stern compartment of the Aurora the little watch tackle that has lain unused while we have floated over so many hundreds of miles. It is now of inestimable value to us; with it we can haul the canoes over the portage without unloading them. Cheerily we go at our work. First one canoe is drawn a few hundred feet, and then we go back and perform a like service for the other. So smoothly

does our rigging work that we are congratulating ourselves on the possibility of completing our task before we turn in for the night; but all of a sudden our hopes are wrecked by the breaking of a sheave in one of the blocks, and as we have nothing at hand with which to repair it, we are forced to cast about for other means of completing the portage. Each man taking from his canoe all that he can carry on his shoulders, transports it to the camp, and we turn in for a night's rest. By two o'clock of the following day we have dragged the canoes to the shore of Big Lagoon, transported and stowed all the dunnage, and are en route to the broad bay, seven miles distant, which we reach as the sunset gun booms out from the parapet of the old Spanish Fort Barancas, and we make our camp on the glistening sands beneath the tall tower, which every minute, from sunset to sunrise, flashes out its warning to the mariner.

Barnacle succeeds in finding a piece of broken spar on the beach, from which he whittles a mast for the *Comfort*, and on the morning of the 3d day of February, with a stiff breeze from the east, we lay our course for the harbor of Pensacola, Fla., seven miles distant. Gaily we scud along under full sail, each skipper hanging well out to windward, taking a ducking now and then as a huge sea comes rolling along. In mid-bay we meet a large vessel with the flag of Russia flying in the breeze, and we are evidently in her course, as she bears away a point in order that she may not run down the wee craft and

drown the skippers. On we go, past the naval station, where more than one glass is brought to bear on us by the crowd of officers and men, and then through the fleet of vessels at the anchorage, whose crews cheer us as we glide by and run up to the wharf, where kind friends receive us.





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